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Grapes of Wrath: One year later

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The Magazine

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Time Out

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Albright warns of Mideast danger

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright yesterday warned of an "unpredictable and dangerous" Middle East situation as Palestinian officials arrived for talks on reviving the moribund peace process.

Sharon Edri's murderers caught



One of Staff-Sgt. Sharon Edri's alleged killers points out the soldier's grave in Kafr Tzurif yesterday. (IDF Spokesman)

Kafr Tzurif Hamas cell behind 11 killings

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN The IDF has located the body of missing Staff-Sgt. Sharon Edri, and broken up the Hamas cell responsible for his kidnap-murder and the killing of at least 11 and the wounding of 49 other Israelis over the past two years.

Previous kidnap-murders, Page 2 Hebron clashes continue, Page 2

Israel sought and received the help of the Palestinian Authority, which arrested two of the terrorists in the Palestinian-controlled part of Hebron and brought them to the West Bank village of Kafr Tzurif to show where they had buried Edri.

Continued on Page 18

'They should have listened to us'

By MARGOT DUDKEVICH Another family plunged into mourning. The heartbreaking cries of parents, brothers, and sisters grieving for their brother, Sharon, pierced the air. Their hopes of seeing him alive were shattered, their world turned upside down in minutes.

Mordechai: We could retake Hebron if needed

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and JON IMMANUEL In a provocative warning to the Palestinians, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said yesterday the IDF could retake Hebron and other Palestinian-controlled cities if it wanted to, but would prefer cooperation instead.

Netanyahu credits PA with helping find Edri

By JON IMMANUEL and news agencies Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday credited the Palestinians with cooperation in locating the body of Staff-Sgt. Sharon Edri.

Hapoel Jerusalem wins basketball's State Cup

Hapoel Jerusalem won basketball's State Cup for the second straight year after scoring an emphatic 89-82 win last night over overwhelming favorites Maccabi Tel Aviv.

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Tzurif terror. The Kafr Tzurif Hamas cell began its terror with drive-by shootings in late 1995 and moved on to kidnappings and eventually the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv last month, according to the IDF.

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Clashes continue in Hebron

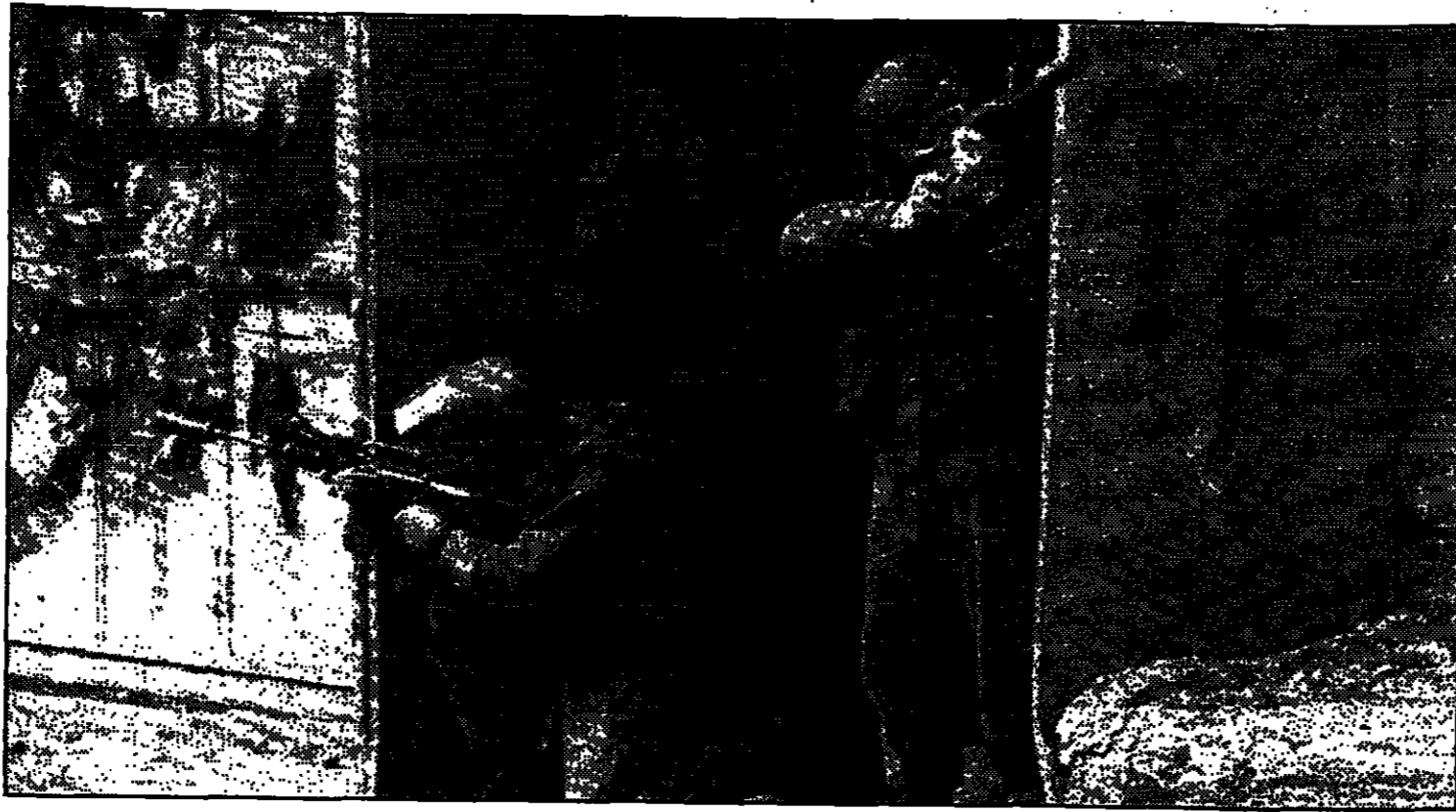
By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Hebron yesterday was once again the scene of fierce clashes between IDF and Border Police forces and rioting Palestinians. According to the IDF Spokesman, 15 firebombs were hurled at soldiers and border policemen, but no one was injured. The Palestinians claim 13 rioters were wounded, mainly by rubber bullets, and taken to hospital.

Rioting broke out in different areas of Hebron throughout the day; a different strategy compared to previous days, when unrest was concentrated in Kikar Hashoter, Shallaha Street, and the casbah. In the morning Palestinians threw bottles and stones at troops near Beit Romano. Settlers also claimed a firebomb was thrown at Beit Hadassah, where hundreds of Palestinians threw stones at soldiers.

Later, rioting was reported in Shallaha Street, El Fara junction near Hebron, and Tarik junction. Although the Palestinian Police tried to prevent the rioters from surging towards IDF troops guarding the Jewish sections, they appeared to lose control of the rioters several times. IDF troops fired rubber bullets to disperse them.

Clashes also erupted briefly in Bethlehem, where scores of



IDF soldiers prepare to fire rubber bullets at Palestinian rioters in Hebron yesterday.

Palestinian university students marched towards Rachel's Tomb and stoned soldiers. Troops fired tear gas and rubber bullets, but there were no reports of casualties.

By late afternoon the rioting had stopped. Settlers belonging to the Committee for Road Safety caught two Palestinians throwing

stones on the Halhoul bypass road yesterday afternoon. They claimed that scores of cars had been damaged yesterday morning due to barrages of stones on the Halhoul

bypass road. The settlers reportedly beat the two 17-year-old Palestinians before releasing them. One of the youths reportedly sought hospital treatment.

Hebron Jews want safety guarantees

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

The Hebron Jewish Community yesterday demanded that the government use a firmer hand to quell the riots and ensure its safety.

Community spokesman Noam Arnon said that it is inconceivable that rioting Palestinians constantly cross into Israeli-controlled areas and IDF troops do nothing.

"The Palestinians are violating the Oslo agreement constantly," he said, adding that on Wednesday rioters reached the entrance to Beit Hadassah and threw firebombs. "It was lucky none of the children were outside."

Leaders of the community met with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai on Wednesday and mentioned the deterioration in security. Points mentioned included the fact that the road to Tel Rumeida through the Israeli-controlled area is being repaired, and settlers are forced to travel on an alternative road in the Palestinian area until the work, which started last month, is completed.

"Yesterday, even the H1 road was closed for some time

because of rioting and Tel Rumeida was completely isolated," Arnon said.

Another Hebron settler, David Wilder added that the settlers also raised the treatment of the two yeshiva students who were arrested for shooting at Palestinians who threw acid in their face. One of the Palestinians later died of his wounds, causing the violence to escalate.

"The two students' lives were in danger, everyone has the right to defend themselves," he said, adding that settlers are issued weapons to defend themselves.

In addition, the settlers also demanded that permits be authorized to continue building in Hebron. According to Wilder, Mordechai said that a permit had been authorized to complete construction of Beit Nahum in the Avraham Avinu quarter, but had left it up to IDF to decide when the time is suitable.

Kiryat Arba activist Elyakim Haezani told Arutz 7 yesterday that if the IDF is unable to control the situation and protect the settlers, then maybe settlers should go into Arab villages to deter the stone-throwers.

Knesset to hold special session

By LIAT COLLINS

The Knesset is expected to hold a special session in the recess on Monday following a request signed by 30 MKs, after four urgent motions to the agenda were put forward.

The motions are:
 "The serious deterioration in the situation in the territories as a result of a freeze in the diplomatic process." (Labor)
 "Ten months of Netanyahu's government -

no peace, and no security." (Meretz)

"The Palestinian Authority's violations of the peace agreements and encouragement of violence," and "The government's stand in the struggle to preserve the unity of Jerusalem." (both Likud).

The initial move for the special session came from MK Eli Goldschmidt, acting Labor faction chairman, who gathered the 30 signatures necessary to request the Knesset be convened in a recess. He said the riots and deaths in

Hebron this week marked a new low since the disturbances in September and were reason to hold a Knesset discussion.

The request was authorized by deputy speaker Meir Sheerit (Likud), who is filling in for Speaker Dan Tichon while he is on an official visit in the Far East with several other MKs.

Also Monday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is scheduled to address the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

Sharon wants Hebron security beefed up

By Jerusalem Post Reporter

Minister of National Infrastructure Ariel Sharon (Likud) called for Israel to change the agreement it signed with the Palestinian

Authority on Hebron to increase security for settlers in the city.

"The situation is very dangerous and it is likely to become worse. The Hebron Accord must be changed to provide additional secu-

urity for Hebron's Jewish residents," Sharon said in a radio interview yesterday. "We cannot rely on other forces to provide protection for our own population."

Sharon said he was not calling

for Israel to re-enter PA-controlled areas, but to make logistical changes that would permit Israeli troops to provide greater security for Hebron's Jewish community.

Previous abduction-murders

The following is a list of IDF soldiers and security personnel kidnapped by terrorists since 1973:

12.73 - Soldier Eli Lupo is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking at Beit Lid.
 1.79 - Soldier David Shamir is kidnapped and murdered near Kerem Shalom. His body is found nine months later. His killers are captured and sentenced to prison.
 11.80 - Soldier Avi Barenberg is kidnapped and murdered near Pardes Hanna. His murderers are captured and sentenced.
 5.83 - Soldier David Bukra is kidnapped at Sharon Junction and shot in the head. His killers are captured.
 8.84 - Soldier Moshe Tamam is kidnapped and murdered on his way home. His killers are sent to prison.
 11.84 - Soldier David Mimos is kidnapped and murdered on the Lod-Petah Tikva road. His body is found nearly two years later. His killers are captured.
 11.84 - Soldier Hadass Kedim is kidnapped while hitchhiking. Her body is found near Kibbutz Beit Oren two weeks later.

4.85 - Soldier Akiva Shattiel is kidnapped and murdered on the Petah Tikva-Rosh Hatayim road. His killers are sentenced.

6.85 - Reservist David Palzan is kidnapped and murdered.

12.85 - Soldier Moshe Levy is kidnapped and murdered, and his body is set on fire. Patah's Force 17 claims responsibility.

2.86 - Soldiers Yosef Fink and Rahamin Alsheikh are kidnapped in southern Lebanon by Hizbullah. Their bodies are returned to Israel in a prisoner exchange in July 1986.

9.87 - Soldier Hanoch Denman is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking near Acre. Two Israeli Arabs are sentenced for his murder.

2.89 - Sgt. Avi Sasportas is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking in the South. His body is found three months later. Hamas claims responsibility.

5.89 - Pvt. Ilan Saradon is kidnapped by Hamas. His body is found in July 1996.

12.92 - Border Police Sgt.-Maj. Nissan Toledano, 29, is kidnapped on his way to work in Lod by Hamas and murdered several hours later. His body is found three days later on the Jerusalem-Jericho road.

3.93 - Pvt. Yehoshua Friedberg, 24, is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking to his base from Jerusalem.

6.93 - Pvt. Yaron Hen is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking near Ramallah, and his body set on fire.

10.93 - Soldiers Ehud Roth and Ilan Levy are kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking in the Gaza Strip.

4.94 - Sgt.-L. Shehar Simani, 20, is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking near Jerusalem. Hamas claims responsibility.

7.94 - Cpl. Arye Frankenthal, 19, is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking near BeerSheva. Hamas claims responsibility.

10.94 - Sgt. Nachshon Wechsman is kidnapped while hitchhiking and killed by his abductors during a rescue attempt by IDF commandos.

IDF Spokesman

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9:30

First Session

Chairman: ARIE KACOWICZ, Department of International Relations,
The Hebrew University

MOSHE LISSAK, Department of Sociology, The Hebrew University

"The Unique Features of Civil-Military Relations in Israel"

VICTOR LAVY, Department of Economics, The Hebrew University

"Regional Political Changes -

Country Risks and Direct Foreign Investments in the Middle East"

Intermission

11:15

Second Session

Chairman: BENJAMIN MILLER, Department of International Relations,
The Hebrew University

MENACHEM HOFNUNG, Department of Political Science, The Hebrew University

"The Peace Process and the Internationalization of Internal Legal Arrangements"

SASSON SOFER, Department of International Relations,
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"Diplomacy of a Divided Society"

12:30

Panel Discussion

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Winning cards and numbers

The winning cards in yesterday's daily Chance drawing were the queen of spades, the 8 of hearts, the 10 of diamonds, and the queen of clubs.

The winning numbers in yesterday's Payis Hazak drawing were as follows:

Ticket number 514748 won NIS 1 million. Ticket 642721 won the car. Tickets 612011, 180648, 423911, 571654, 764478, 240066, and 664321 won NIS 5,000.

Winning NIS 1,000 were cards ending in 91321, 49480, 52974, 95416, 07554, 52414, 24385, 95942, 84162, 57121, 22396, 58189, 98702, 78112, 54847, 59239, 00543, 86619, and 22620. Cards ending in 610, 313, 659, and 704 won NIS 100. Those ending in 39, 03, 81, and 79 won NIS 30. Cards ending in 84 and 63 won NIS 20; and ending in 6 won NIS 10.

CORRECTION

Gerard Benhamou is the Israeli representative of the International Abolitionist Federation, and not as reported on April 7.

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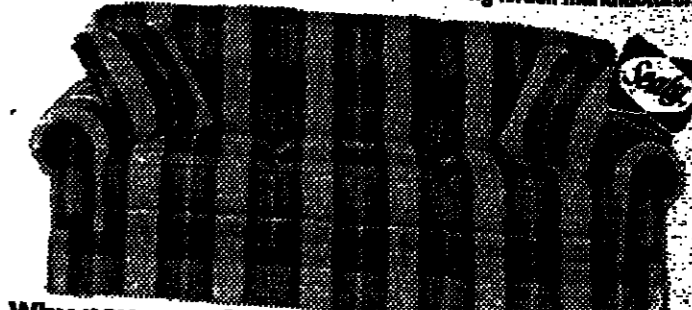
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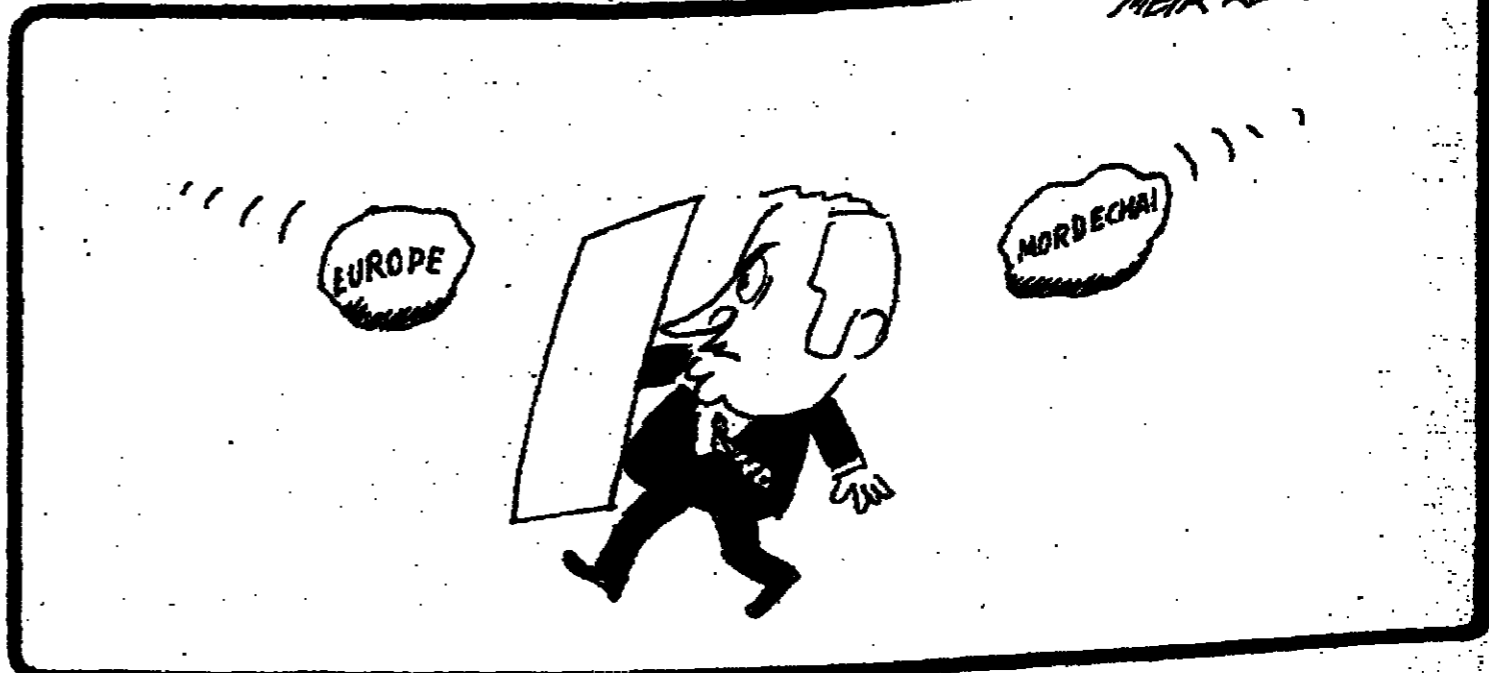
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Ritual battle

The Reform and Conservative movements of American Jewry are gearing up for the most serious battle with the Israeli political system since the "Who is a Jew?" fight. The debate over the conversion bill is less about "Who is a Jew?" than "Who is an Israeli?"

The "Who is a Jew?" battle was sparked when Israel's religious parties tried to amend the Law of Return in a way that was interpreted as disqualifying Reform and Conservative conversions, and by extension, the movements themselves.

That effort was defeated, and the status quo, which recognizes Reform and Conservative conversions abroad, remained intact. But petitions to the High Court of Justice to recognize conversions here by the local Reform and Conservative movements seem to have backfired, spurring the religious parties to try cementing the Orthodox monopoly on conversions into law.

The Reform and Conservative movements are understandably concerned that legalizing the existing discrimination against them in Israel makes a bad situation worse. As the Rabbinic Assembly of the Conservative Movement resolved on Wednesday at its meeting in Boston, "We are outraged at the latest attempt to deny full religious rights to the largest segment of world Jewry - an act that denies the pluralistic nature of Judaism and betrays the inclusive vision of Zionism." The resolution also called on America's 1,400 Conservative rabbis to boycott any Knesset member who is "not in opposition" to the bill that just passed the Knesset in first reading. This formulation was specifically chosen to include towers of political courage such as MKs Ehud Barak, Yossi Beilin, Ephraim Sneh, and Shlomo Ben-Ami who were artfully absent from the vote.

While the boycott threat is fair game, and might make some MKs who receive financial support from abroad think twice, it also serves to highlight the lopsided balance of power on this issue. The loss of a speaking engagement is hardly a match for the political clout of religious MKs, who rank the maintenance of Israel's Orthodox monopoly as a top political, religious, and even budgetary imperative.

What galls the Reform and Conservative movements most is the realization that, beyond the real but solvable religious differences, they are up against a monopoly that is beating away competition as vigorously as any closed-shop union or public utility. It is like fighting the Israel Electric Corporation.

Like any monopoly, Israel's Orthodox monopoly stifles initiative, reduces "consumer" choice, and is prone to corruption and insolence - as demonstrated by the recent "conversion for

cash" scandal. Worse, the Orthodox monopoly controls aspects of Israeli life that should not be in government hands except in the most perfunctory way - such as marriage, divorce, and conversion.

To most Israelis, however, the role of the (all-Orthodox) rabbinate and the existence of religious parties is a fact of political and daily life. And as grating as that is to many of them, they do not view Reform and Conservative Judaism as a legitimate alternative, but an American import that does not speak to the Israeli experience. Clearly, the synagogue they don't go to is Orthodox.

Ironically, the institutionalization of Orthodoxy in Israel may have soured Israelis on the Reform and Conservative movements, too. "Secular" Israelis live in a Jewish country, speak Hebrew, live by a Jewish calendar - culturally, at work, and in the home - and are suspicious of anyone that seeks to mold their organic form of Judaism into an institutional framework.

Attitudes can change, and it certainly would not hurt for the Reform and Conservative movements to help provide Israelis with a wider range of educational and congregational choices. At the end of the day, however - and here we get to the Israeli hobbyhorse - the only way to make a real impact is for these movements to vote with their feet.

If more of the best and the brightest of American rabbis moved to Israel and set up shop, Israelis might begin to appreciate the meaning and potential of Jewish plurality by seeing it in action. The Rabbinical Assembly, on this score, is to be commended for resolving, as part of their response to the conversion bill, to "educate their congregants about... the mitzva of aliyah." In the meantime, the best immediate resolution of this standoff is the solution that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Natan Shtrasky's Yisrael Be'aliya Party, and The Third Way are all pursuing. Their idea is for the Reform and Conservative movements to drop their legal challenges to the status quo, in exchange for the religious parties dropping the conversion bill.

While this is an eminently sensible stopgap measure, it is critical that its backers include something else in the package: a commitment to formulate a joint standard for conversion acceptable to all three movements. A good person to tap to get the ball rolling would be Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein, who happens to be an observant Jew who also is respected among American Jewry. Netanyahu and all the non-religious parties need to act responsibly, not so much to advance the Reform and Conservative movements in Israel as to prevent a growing split within the Jewish people.

Apathetic Mr. Average Israeli

YOSEF LAPID

When the prime minister goes to the US and talks to an audience of Christian Evangelists while avoiding a gathering of Reform Jews, you don't know whether to laugh or cry.

But it's no joke. It's a tragicomic byproduct of the process of haredization that is eating away at the enlightened, progressive, democratic and open face of our society.

Another example: A committee set up by the government to enhance Jewish values on radio has proposed that Shelly Yehimovich's 'It's All Talk' be presented one day a week by a "traditional" host, on another day by an Orthodox one, and on a third day by a haredi. Generously, the committee left half the week to the seculars.

Or take the conversion bill. The four aspirants to the Labor Party leadership - Generalissimo Barak, Ideologue Ben-Ami, "Mister Clean" Sneh, and "Good Boy" Beilin - came out with every kind of excuse to explain their absence from the disgraceful Knesset vote.

Principles? Who cares about those, when all eyes are on the future, when the haredi vote is likely to have a certain impact.

Meretz has been going on about this "act of betrayal" as if they didn't cooperate with Shas during the Rabin and Peres administrations "because peace is more important than anything else" - at least according to Shulamit Aloni, who knew a thing or two about combating religious coercion before she went astray.

Haim Ramon did stay to vote against the law - but then, he didn't

have anything to lose. Back when he had something to gain, he was quick to sell Shas a pound of flesh from a decomposing Histadrut.

So much for betrayal by the Left. Betrayal by the Right? No one even mentions it, as though it was destined that the successors of Jabotinsky - that secular liberal and out-and-out anti-cleric - would become the blind followers of obscurantist rabbis selling talismans, prophesying the painful demise of the "clowns" at Habima, and cursing "rabbit-eat-

We might have come to terms with them, had we seen a bit of mutual cooperation, each side conceding a little. But that was never part of the deal.

It doesn't end there. Over the past few years a massive haredi army has mushroomed, sustained predominantly by the secular taxpayer. Its members don't hold jobs or serve in the IDF. Their trade is their faith, and their faith is their excuse.

Tens of thousands squeeze into yeshivas; only a tiny percentage

The haredim are imposing a lifestyle we don't want on us? Don't blame them

ing kibbutzniks. If, on the social values scale, Scandinavia rates 0 and the Taliban in Afghanistan 100, then we began at 50, have moved up to 50, and are well on our way to 70. This haredi nibbling away at our lives has slowly gotten us used to draconian measures and diverse humiliations undreamt of by enlightened people in open societies.

Druze supervisors go out hunting for businesses open on Shabbat; secular citizens pay for the kashering of products they don't care about; rabbinical courts abuse women who apply for a divorce; there is no public transport on our one day off work.

To all these decrees we have surrendered, even though they are unjust, unnecessary and unwanted.

deserve the title of talmid hacham. The rest are God's artillery.

Disconnected from the world, educated to despise Zionism and the state, sinking into condescending ignorance and obediently serving their religious leaders, this gargantuan, unenlightened force goes on amassing political and public power.

No longer satisfied with the crumbs a corrupt secular government has used to bribe them, they sense their time has come, and have gone from the defensive to the attack - "converting" secular Israelis to Judaism, imposing their lifestyle on the system as a whole.

And so what if, in the process, the vast majority of American Jewry gets alienated? It means nothing to them.

The secular population worries about our existential struggle with the Palestinians; meanwhile, the state for which it fought slips out of its hands.

We are no longer surprised to see hotels built on stilts (to leave an escape route for the souls underground); we no longer ask ourselves why autopsies are restricted, contrary to accepted procedure in the Western world.

We've stopped protesting about expensive kosher meat being imported instead of cheap non-kosher meat; we don't jump up when the Knesset approves, on first reading, a bill that says if your name is Cohen or Katz or Kahana, you can't marry a divorcee - at the end of the 20th century, no less!

The haredim may be using democracy to force a lifestyle it doesn't want on the secular public, but they aren't to blame for what's going on. It's apathetic Mr. Average Israeli, who belly-aches but doesn't actually do anything.

It's the secular parties, who'll sell their souls to enlist the haredim in their fight against their secular rivals.

It's our intelligentsia, with their fond memories of Grandpa from Lodz or Marrakesh, who stand unresisting as the waves of Khomeinism engulf us.

And it's the Conservative and Reform Jews in the US, who never made a serious effort to put down roots in Israel that could have served as a counterweight to Orthodox dominance.

The author is senior editorial writer for Ma'ariv.

The Great Conversion Controversy

STEWART WEISS

Unity. Brotherhood. Peace. These are some of the buzzwords being bandied about in the Great Conversion Controversy now sweeping the nation.

If you support the right of Reform and Conservative rabbis to perform conversions here in Israel, then you are in favor of coexistence, a peace-lover, and a true champion of freedom.

If, however, you dare to favor retaining the status quo, in which only conversions performed under Orthodox, halachic guidelines are permitted, then you automatically become some hideous ogre of primitivism, an extreme proponent of oppressive theocracy who wants to force his brand of religion down the next guy's spiritual throat.

Well, this is one rabbi who resents all the ugly labels being plastered on the observant community, just because we have the audacity to believe that the Jewish standards in force for 3,000-plus years ought to remain in place in Israel.

My ties to the past do not make me archaic; nor does my defense of Halacha make me an autocratic ayatollah. For while it sounds so simple to brand traditionalists as "non-pluralists" and "religious fanatics," anyone who gets past the platitudes and looks at the issues themselves may draw quite a different conclusion.

Consider: Reform Jews now accept the patrilineal definition of Jewish lineage, whereby the child of a Christian mother and Jewish father is considered Jewish. By "changing the rules" in the

middle of the game," tampering with the accepted formula for "Who is a Jew," the movement has rendered thousands of young Jews ineligible to marry other Jews, who still cling to the traditional definitions.

Does this promote unity among our people? The Reform movement does not require - in fact, often discourages - the issuing of a get or

practices at virtually every significant juncture.

Ritual circumcision is no longer required, and sometimes even discouraged; homosexuality is accepted as a valid lifestyle, with gay synagogues and rabbis openly welcomed into the movement; and the "uniform" of Judaism - from kippa to tefillin, not to mention kashrut - is discarded in favor of whatever garb happens to be in

I'm tired of being labeled an extreme proponent of oppressive theocracy

religious divorce.

Thus, when a woman receives her civil divorce and remarries without having received a Jewish divorce, children born to her subsequently are halachically mamzerim, forbidden to marry other Jews. This further fragments the Jewish people, creating two camps whose members cannot marry one another.

Is this brotherhood? A child born to Christian parents and adopted by Jews is automatically considered Jewish by the standards of the Reform, which has summarily decided he need not undergo any conversion at all. Such children, halachically non-Jewish, are often never even told of their true lineage. They often find themselves placed in excruciating situations years later, when the truth comes out.

Does this promote peace between all Jews? Reform Judaism has chosen to part ways with traditional Jewish

vogue. Even belief in God is no longer a given among Reform clergy.

There are Reform rabbis who openly question whether God exists, and who see to it that all mention of God is excised from their prayer books!

Must I accept and condone these deviations from Judaism in the name of "peace," even if I believe they will destroy our faith?

HAD the non-traditionalist streams of Judaism created a Renaissance of Jewish commitment in the countries where they already thrive, I would have to be more hesitant in my criticism of them.

But the opposite is true: Among non-Orthodox Jews in the Diaspora, the twin cancers of assimilation and intermarriage are spreading at horrific rates, decimating Jewish communities and causing the worldwide Jewish population outside of Israel to

shrink. Not even "legislating in" whole groups of non-Jews through patrilinealism or simplifying conversions has stemmed the losses.

Is this the model we want to establish here in Israel?

At the heart of the matter is whether we believe that the times shape the Torah, or that the Torah must shape the times.

If it is the former, then the practices of Jewish observance are destined to float perpetually through the air, blown this way and that by whatever winds of cult or culture are blowing at the moment.

But if it is the latter, then we are anchored to our law, our land, and our religious life by a common thread of tradition that stretches from Sinai to the end of time.

With that thread, we weave a tapestry of history, peoplehood, and spiritual commonality unparalleled in the annals of human achievement.

The picture we are painting takes great inspiration, great diligence and hard work by every artist of every generation who lends his hand to it. Mud will often get thrown by those within and without who do not understand.

In the end, however, only an arduous, determined and collective effort from a people united in their true tradition can create the masterpiece that is the Jewish people.

The writer directs Midreshet Torah V'Emanah, Women's Seminary in Jerusalem and the Jewish Outreach Center in Ra'anana.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OLD JAFFA

Sir, - In her article of April 1, "Pain of those empty seats," Helen Motro refers to Jaffa as "an old Arab town."

According to Zev Vilnay, (The Guide to Israel) Jaffa has been an important seaport and gateway to Jerusalem since antiquity. The

town belonged to the tribe of Dan and later, under King Solomon, it became Jerusalem's seaport. Vilnay also mentions the Maccabees as reigning in this town. Like the rest of the land of Israel, Jaffa was conquered by the Greeks, the Romans, the

Crusaders and the Arab invaders before the Jews returned in '48. Jaffa an old town? Most certainly. But calling it "Arab" seems to me to have more to do with propaganda.

LEA DE LANGE Jerusalem.

BERGEN-BELSEN

Sir, - The Jossi Berger Holocaust Study Center of Eumunah College will sponsor its annual Yom Hashoah V'Hagvurah commemoration program on Sunday, May 4 at 4 p.m. at the college, 104 Derech Beit Lechem, Baka, Jerusalem. This year's program will focus on

the liberation of Bergen-Belsen. The public is invited to this English program and a special invitation is extended to Bergen-Belsen survivors who will meet after the program.

Speakers will be Rev. Leslie Hardman, Jewish Chaplain with the British Liberating Forces;

Hannah Greenfield, survivor; and Sima Shurikowitz, survivor. Rena Quint, President of the Study Center, herself a survivor of Bergen-Belsen, will make welcoming remarks.

HELEN GROSS JANE KLITSNER Jerusalem.

FINAL STATUS

Sir, - It has been suggested that Washington is interested in putting together a package deal, in which the Palestinians will pronounce a cessation of terror and violence, and Israel will undertake a freeze on building in the territories, including the suspension of building on Har Homa, for a six-month period. Incredibly, this was supported on the BBC by a leader of Israel's main opposition party, former minister Ephraim Sneh. On no account should Israel accept this proposal, as it confuses and equates two entirely different issues: the question of violence and the prejudicing of final-settlement talks.

The cessation of Palestinian violence against Israeli soldiers and civilians (be it in the form of terrorist attacks, petrol bombs and stonings, kidnappings or knifings) is not a subject for negotiation, nor a concession by Arafat for which Israel must respond with further significant concessions of its own. The cessation of acts of violence, threats of violence in the future, and incitement to violence, is not a bargaining point at any stage of negotiations, but a precondition of the peace process as a whole. Giving up the option of terrorism and other forms of vio-

lence was an a priori condition of starting the peace process. Without an unconditional undertaking to abstain from violence, there would have been no Oslo agreement in the first place. We do not have to buy freedom from violence over and over again, with new concessions and gestures of goodwill, at every difficult stage in the negotiations. The formula "no settlements and no terrorism" is a thinly disguised reward for the cynical Palestinian use of violence as a negotiating tactic, and must be rejected out of hand.

The only logical argument put forward for a freeze on settlement in the territories and Jerusalem is that it preempts the final agreement. But agreement on the final status involves more than the fulfilling of Arab ambitions. The future of all Jewish settlements in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, and the final borders between the Palestinian entity and Israel, are - together with other significant issues - also matters for resolution in the final stages. The surrender of territories (code-named "redeployment") in areas A and B, envisaged in Oslo II, prejudices these crucial issues. Redeployment is irreversible, and subverts Israel's negotiating posi-

tion in the final stages. For us, this is no less vital than the marginal expansion of existing settlements, or building in Har Homa, is for the Palestinians. If Israel is to consider going beyond the Oslo agreement, in order not to foreclose Palestinian options, then it must also insist that its own positions in these talks be safeguarded. The only proper quid pro quo for an Israel freeze on Har Homa would be Palestinian agreement to a similar freeze on all further redeployments in areas B and C. The only fair and equitable package deal for Israel to consider would be: final-status talks now, a freeze on settlements, and a freeze on all further redeployment. This, of course, depends on a prior condition: the unequivocal and demonstrable commitment on the part of Arafat and the Palestinian Authority to reject violence as an option, and to combat it vigorously. If we do not insist on this linkage, there is a danger that the final settlement will, God forbid, be a fateful step towards that disastrous final solution which many of us believe is the Arabs' true goal in this dubious peace process.

GILBERT HERBERT Haifa.

POSTSCRIPTS

THE TENDENCY of Chinese parents to give their children simple, commonly used names is wreaking havoc within the nation's bureaucracy, leading police to chase down the wrong suspects and inconveniencing everyone.

So complain China's census takers, who in their last survey discovered more than 4,600 people in Beijing sharing the name Zhang Li and a similar number all named Zhang Ying.

In Shenyang, the census takers found more than 4,800 people named Liang Shuzhen, and more

than 3,000 each named, respectively, Wang Wei, Li Wei and Li Fe.

"Not only is this inconvenient for everyone, but it also causes confusion in household registries, personnel management, telephone directories, school records and police work," a report said.

The customary "100 Family Surnames" have tended to predominate in China, with Wang, Zhang, Li, Chen and Liu being among the most common.

They should look on the bright side, though: no one named David Cohen.

SOME OF the toughest cops in Manila are pounding a different kind of beat these days.

It's strictly ballroom when the men and women of Manila's Western Police District gather to unwind after a day chasing crooks.

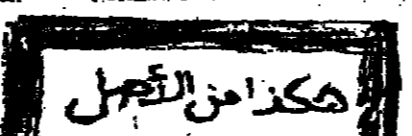
The cha-cha and tango provide a perfect antidote to stress, as well as a workout that leaves everyone sweaty but smiling.

"This ballroom dancing is not only an exercise but a form of releasing tension and a venue where they can learn art and culture," said police chief Colonel

Avelino Razon, who came up with the idea of introducing the 3,000-strong officers in his district to the foxtrot, rumba and swing.

Policemen used to resort to cards and booze when they got off duty, leaving them not just broke and drunk but tired and unfit as well, Razon said.

"That was my big problem - how to get them hooked on something that would make them sweat so that they could have their regular work-out," he added.



German court blames Iran in Berlin killing

News agencies

BERLIN — A German court ruled yesterday that Iran's top leaders were behind the assassination of an Iranian-Kurdish opposition figure in Berlin, shaking the foundations of Germany's policy of close ties and continued trade with the Tehran regime.

Within hours, Bonn recalled its ambassador to Iran and ordered the expulsion of four Iranian diplomats. In a statement, the Foreign Ministry said the verdict indicated "a flagrant breach of international law" by Iran.

Iran also recalled its ambassador to Bonn for consultations, Iranian television reported.

The German court convicted two men of murder and two of being accessories to murder in the Sept. 17, 1992 killing of Kurdish leader Sadiq Sarafkandi and three of his colleagues in the Mykonos restaurant.

Presiding Judge Frithjof Kubsch said, however, that the men acted not on their own, but on orders from Tehran. "The Iranian political leadership is responsible," he said, adding that its goal was to

eliminate political dissidents.

Judge Kubsch had said in his ruling that the assassination of the four Kurdish leaders ordered by a secret special operations committee whose members included Iran's president, its religious leader, intelligence minister and the head of foreign policy.

He stopped short of explicitly naming Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who had been accused by prosecutors of ultimate responsibility for the attack in Berlin's Mykonos restaurant.

The verdict marked the first time that a European court had clearly attributed political responsibility for any of the dozens of assassinations of Iranian opposition figures abroad since the Islamic revolution in 1979.

Iran quickly dismissed the verdict as political, and withdrew its own ambassador for consultations.

"This accusation is not true," Iranian parliamentary speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri told reporters during a visit to Moscow. "We have asked the German

leadership many times if there is any evidence and if so to present it to us. But until now they haven't. The trial had a political tinge."

Operators at the Iranian Foreign Ministry in Teheran said no one was available to take phone calls, and an embassy spokesman in Bonn said they had no comment.

While Washington has sought to isolate Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism, Germany and other European Union countries have for years pursued a "critical dialogue" policy, continuing to do profitable business with Iran while discussing issues of terrorism and human rights.

Washington, which has sought to isolate Iran for sponsoring such terrorist acts, called on European government to move to "choke off trade with Iran." "The 'critical dialogue' has not succeeded in moderating Iran's behavior," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

"There is no evidence that the 'critical dialogue' has made a difference."

The Foreign Ministry said Germany will "not participate for the foreseeable future" in that poli-



An anti-Iranian government protester demonstrates outside the Berlin court.

cy, and said it was in close contact with its EU partners. It was unclear what the impact of the

decision would be. Germany is Iran's biggest Western trade partner, with trade

exceeding 3 billion marks (\$1.8 billion) last year, and had been one of the strongest proponents in

the EU for keeping the controversial "critical dialogue" policy alive.

Floodwaters threaten North Dakota

FARGO, North Dakota (AP) — People in North Dakota's largest city stepped up their flood-fighting yesterday, rushed by a prediction that the swollen Red River will crest more than a foot higher than expected.

Volunteers met at the Fargo Civic Center, where they were stuffed onto buses and hauled to riverside neighborhoods to add more sandbags to dikes that residents had believed were high enough to hold back the water. "It's not going well at all," said a hurried Troy Krabbenhoft, whose back yard was under water. "They're talking about a lot more water."

The region's worst flooding in decades started last week when temperatures hit 15C, quickly melting the winter snow that was up to twice as deep as normal. The rain began last Friday and turned into a blizzard that piled up to a meter more of snow across the prairie.

The blizzard was followed by record cold that turned snow and floodwaters into sheets of ice.

British election campaign heats up

News agencies

LONDON (Reuters) — After three weeks of testing enemy battle lines, the two main armies in Britain's election campaign are finally on the move.

The fight for power has intensified considerably this week, at the half-way stage in the campaign, coinciding with tentative opinion poll evidence that the ruling Conservatives have checked and may be pushing back the advance of their Labor opponents.

Certainly, the mood in the Conservative camp has brightened as the ruling party's guns start to find their range.

In Birmingham, Prime Minister John Major snapped at a reporter who asked him about sleaze allegations against former Conservative trade minister Neil Hamilton.

He accused another of trying to lay a bear trap for him and later sounded in vaudeville mood when he confided that he thought quashing inflation would be his greatest legacy.

But by Wednesday night, on a flight back from a day on the stump in Wales, he was chatting animatedly with journalists after hearing that a MORI poll had shown the Conservatives narrowing Labor's lead to 15 points from 27 points in a week.

And at yesterday's daily news conference he breezily promised to be still there answering questions in five years' time.

While Major has rediscovered a spring in his step, Labor leader Tony Blair is being forced onto the back foot.

He was as confident as ever during a hard day's campaigning in western England but has looked uneasy this week when grilled in high-profile BBC television and radio interviews and at his daily news conferences.

Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine gleefully claimed Blair was cracking under the strain of explaining apparent policy shifts over privatization and union rights.

Future Hong Kong government blasted over freedom restrictions

HONG KONG — Hong Kong's future government drew a blast of criticism yesterday after launching proposals to curb civil liberties when the British colony returns to Chinese rule on July 1.

Chief Executive-designate Tung Chee-hwa's team sprang to the defensive, arguing that the proposals were necessary and responsible, and Beijing chimed in with its support.

But Tung's plan to put new limits on the right to demonstrate and form political organizations came under fire from pro-democracy politicians, departing British Governor Chris Patten and newspaper editorials.

"It astonishingly argues that the restrictions are needed because 'social stability' is under

threat in Hong Kong," said legislator Christine Loh.

"Why is our future chief executive publishing such alarmist nonsense? It is seriously damaging to confidence in Hong Kong's future for him to do so," she said.

The White House said yesterday it was "fundamentally important" that Hong Kong residents continue to enjoy the freedoms they now have when China takes over the British colony.

Spokesman Mike McCurry said: "We think it is fundamentally important for all sides to respect the commitments that they have made in the joint declaration of basic law, which provides the basis for the one-China, two-systems formula that promises that Hong Kong will continue to thrive and its people will enjoy the freedoms that they have come to expect."

He said he did not know if President Bill Clinton would meet the leader of Hong Kong's democracy movement, Martin Lee, who is on a lobbying mission in the United States and has protested against the proposed curbs on political freedoms.

Tung launched the proposed curbs on Wednesday for a three-week public consultation process. The proposals require demonstrators to get police permission before taking to the streets and bar local groups from having ties with foreign political organizations.

They were widely expected after China's National People's Congress (NPC), or parliament, in February declared parts of Hong Kong's Public Order and Societies ordinances incompatible with the Basic Law, the territory's future constitution promulgated by Beijing.

Jupiter moon pictures indicate oceans

PASADENA (AP) — "Mind-blowing pictures" of large icebergs on the surface of Jupiter's frozen moon Europa are tantalizing scientists with the possibility they've found evidence of a dynamic ocean, which could have spawned life at some point.

The closeup pictures taken by the unmanned Galileo spacecraft during a Feb. 20 flyby have scientists more eager than ever to explore the icy moon's interior.

Their enthusiasm was palpable yesterday as those images, including an animated video, were released at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

"It looks as though we found the smoking gun that points at this subsurface ocean," said Michael Carr, a geologist with the US Geological Survey.

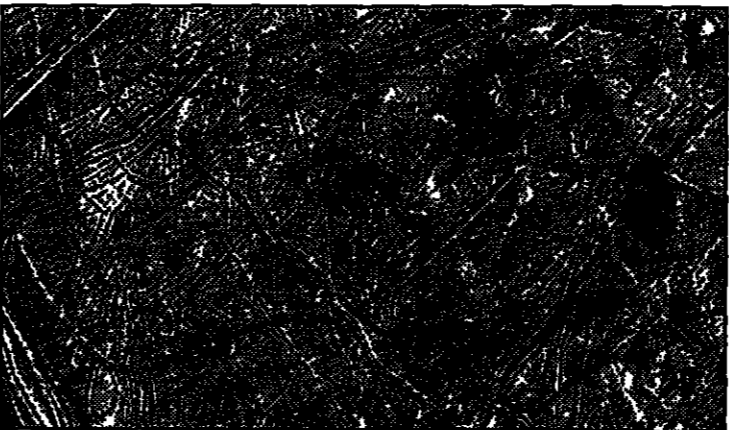
"These are really mind-blowing pictures," said Richard Terrile, an astronomer at the JPL. "How often is an ocean discovered? ... There is very strong evidence that there is

an ocean here." The pictures of icy chunks scattered like pottery shards provide "the clearest evidence to date there is liquid water and melting close to the surface of Europa," said Torrence Johnson, the Galileo project scientist at JPL.

But, Johnson cautioned "we have no evidence directly bearing on life." Carr said the icy blocks, each about 3 to 6 km across and resembling icebergs seen at the poles here on Earth, appeared to have drifted apart. "You can push them back together to reconstruct

the original pattern," he said. Their movement adds weight to scientists' notion that a relatively warm watery or slushy layer underlies a frozen crust that could be anywhere up to 95 km thick.

Oceanographer John Delaney of the University of Washington said the water on Europa is probably rich in salt and other dissolved chemicals from millennia of interaction with rocks and was spiked by incoming comets with the organic molecules necessary for life.



The crusty surface of Jupiter's moon Europa.

The Staff of the Sephardic Educational Center in Jerusalem extends deep, heartfelt condolences to its World President and Founder Dr. Jose A. Nessim and family on the passing of his beloved mother

ANA NESSIM אנה נסימ

May you be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

Bernard Frydman, Director

Natali Alkalai **Shiri Badayev**

Nirit Cohen **Keren Cohen**

Adi Malka **Sivan Fathi**

Ya'ala Me'iri

יהי זכרן ברוך

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Sincere condolences to our colleague **Aaron Katsman** upon the loss of his mother

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The Staff of CommStock Trading Co., Ltd.

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Speakers:
Meir Shamgar, former President of the Supreme Court
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Tuesday, April 15, 1997 (8 Nisan 5757) at 8:00 p.m.

Hebrew Union College
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Jerusalem

The journalist: Overworking to put out a dull paper

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ah, the American journalist - he finds his own paper dull, he thinks newspapers have a diminishing importance and he feels he doesn't get enough feedback from the boss, a survey says.

By age 60, he thinks he'll be doing something else. For all that, 77 percent of American newspaper people say that if they had to do it over, they'd choose again to go into newspapering. But that's down from the 84 percent who said so in a similar survey in 1988.

For the most part, the journalist is still "he" — 63 percent of editors, reporters, photographers, copy editors and editorial writers are male. But among those 30 or under, half are women.

The survey of "the expectations, aspirations, satisfactions and dissatisfactions of newspaper journalists" was undertaken by the American Society of Newspaper Editors and made public at ASNE's convention yesterday.

A total of 1,037 editors, reporters, photographers, copy editors and editorial writers on 61 large, average-sized and small papers participated.

One striking finding is that when journalists read their own papers, they often don't find them interesting. Sixty-four percent said they only occasionally or rarely consider their own paper "a good read."

Only 36 percent find it "usually very interesting." And while 40 percent think their own papers are getting better, 21 percent think they are getting worse.

As for the impact of newspapers on society, a 55 percent majority think newspapers will play a less important part in American life 10 years from now. Eight years ago, 33 percent thought that way.

Asked about their complaints, 46 percent mentioned having little impact, dealing with insignificant matters, a lack of opportunity to be creative and "the daily grind." Low pay and benefits was listed by 23 percent.

Seventy-two percent said they rarely or only occasionally get feedback on the work they do.

Only 43 percent said they plan to be on a newspaper staff by time they reach 60.

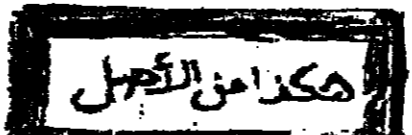
Money is the biggest reason given for anticipating a departure. Twenty-six percent cite finances, especially the younger news people. But working conditions, stress and family considerations were also mentioned. Stress was a bigger factor on big papers than the smaller ones.

In line with other polls, the survey found that most newspaper people are liberals. The proportion of those calling themselves conservatives or Republicans was down to 15 percent; in 1988, it had been 22 percent.

Overall, the number of news room employees dropped by about 1,000 to 54,000.

In a farewell speech, Robert H. Giles, president of the society and editor and publisher of *The Detroit News*, acknowledged that a goal set by the society in 1978 — to make the minority representation in news rooms equal to that in the population by the year 2000 — will not be met.

Minorities make up only 11.3 percent of news staff this year. No minorities were employed in the newsrooms of 43.5 percent of US papers, most of them small. Currently minorities constitute 24 percent of the US population.



Against all odds

The monitoring committee established in south Lebanon after Operation Grapes of Wrath is more effective than Israeli officials ever believed it would be, Arie O'Sullivan reports

They said it wouldn't hold water. They said it was just a diplomatic veil to get out of Lebanon after the Kafr Kana fiasco. They said it wouldn't have any bite. But a year after the 17-day Operation Grapes of Wrath, the five-nation monitoring group set up to monitor the cease-fire understandings drawn up last April is still functioning and, according to its Israeli representative Brig.-Gen. David Tzur, actually preventing potentially explosive tensions from escalating.

"Back then, the optimists said we wouldn't last eight months," said Tzur, commander of the IDF Liaison Unit with foreign forces and former deputy head of the military intelligence research department. "But the monitoring group has done what it was meant to do and proves itself with every new incident which has the potential of causing a deterioration in the area."

Tzur said that the main goal of Grapes of Wrath was to remove the civilians from the cycle of violence - and it did.

"You can look at this as a great success," he said. "For a whole year, the residents of the north have not been frightened about Katyushas being fired on them."

"A second success, as compared to the understandings reached in 1993 [after Operation Accountability]," said Tzur, "is that the understandings now also include the residents of the security zone. That is no less important because the IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] work together."

ISRAELI BEGAN Operation

force an end to the operation.

The April 26 cease-fire brokered by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher specifically prohibits attacks against civilians or from civilian populated areas on both sides of the border. But they leave open the option of armed conflict between forces. It is this conflict that extracts a toll from the IDF in the security zone and its ally, the 2,500-strong SLA.

But despite this, the monitor group continues to function. "I am surprised that it is still meeting," said Dr. Gerald Steinberg, a senior researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center at Bar-Ilan University. "I saw this as a means for [then-prime minister] Shimon Peres to end the conflict quickly and get out. It was a fig leaf," Steinberg said. "But it has turned out to be much more. It is taken seriously by all sides. They do raise their complaints of the violations of using civilian areas as a base for military attacks and for them being hit in counter attack."

Steinberg said that a year ago it was felt by the Israeli leadership and some top IDF brass that the monitoring group, which has representatives from the United States, France, Syria, Israel and Lebanon, would help in negotiations with the Syrians which were expected to pick up after the May elections. Now, with the Syrian track frozen, the monitoring group is the only official body where Syrian and Israeli delegates actually meet face-to-face.

"That is another reason why none of the parties want this last forum to disintegrate. They don't want to fail. It is the only place

es are obvious, the failure, Oren says, is that it shows that after almost 50 years, Israelis and Arabs still can't sit together to solve problems without some kind of external mediation.

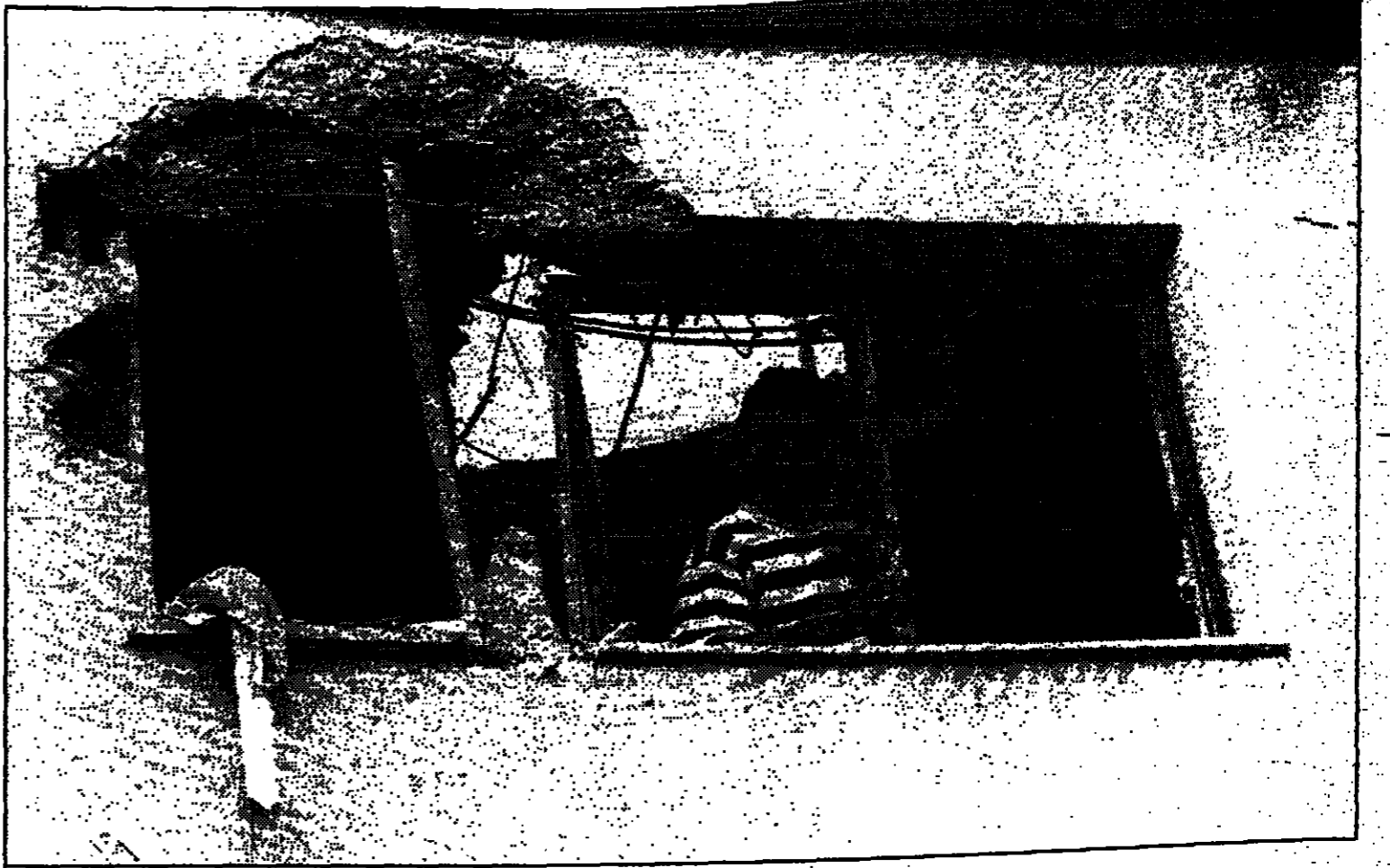
Still, it is this mediation that keeps the monitoring group going, according to Steinberg. "We have lots of external pressure on Syria and Lebanon and it comes from France. The Syrians are less sensitive to the Americans and they see the French as an alternative to the United States."

"If the French fail here, then their efforts to come back into the Middle East could be set back. The French take their role very seriously and they have put a lot of effort into this monitoring group," Steinberg said.

France assumed the rotating chairmanship of the monitoring group four months ago and is to give it back to the Americans on May 1.

Since the Arab states felt the Americans favored the Israeli side and the Israelis suspected the French were pro-Arabist, it was agreed upon from the beginning that any decision would be a unanimous one and no vote was taken. Because the summaries are agreed upon by all sides, they usually condemn an incident and not a country.

"This is a main factor in the work of the monitor," Tzur said. "You cannot summarize the discussions with very extreme or one-sided decisions because you have to have this unanimity. This also causes you to discuss the language so much. That is why it takes time."



A Kiryat Shmona resident looks through the window of his destroyed home exactly one year ago.

(Avihu Shapiro/Israel Sun)

Northern exposure

David Rudge visits Kiryat Shmona and finds a town coping with battle scars and broken government promises

Kiryat Shmona displays no outward signs of the havoc wreaked by the scores of Katyusha rockets that blasted the town before and during Operation Grapes of Wrath exactly one year ago.

The homes and public buildings, including schools, that were damaged in the rocket salvos, as well as factories and business premises, have all been repaired. On the surface, Kiryat Shmona has returned to normal, and the physical scars of the conflict have been erased or plastered over. There are even external signs of growing prosperity. A new shopping mall, known as "Shmona Ba'emza", with its own kosher McDonald's, hypermarket, drug-store and other shops, was inaugurated in the town on Tuesday night - 12 months, almost to the day, after the rocket attacks that led to the onset of Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Underneath, however, the psychological effects of the "Katyusha syndrome" - the trauma of the rocket danger, of nights in bomb shelters and security rooms, families split up with many being evacuated from their homes and others staying behind to guard them - continue to linger. Psychologists and school counselors spent weeks, and in some cases months, helping children and adults to come to terms with their trepidation. For the most part, they succeeded.

The number of residents who have left Kiryat Shmona permanently as a result of the bombardments is about equal to the number of newcomers who have moved into the town since.

Even so, the slam of a car door nearby, the sonic boom of low-flying jets, the clatter of helicopters or the distant blast of IDF and South Lebanese Army artillery firing at Hizbullah targets in Lebanon are often sufficient to set the pulses of some residents racing - even of those who prefer not to admit it, even privately.

And underlying it all is the knowledge that the situation in south Lebanon, a few kilometers

northwards and beyond the international border, remains as unstable and unpredictable as ever.

THE THREAT of further attacks and the attendant disruption of what is blithely called "normal life" are as pertinent now as at any time in the turbulent history of the north in general, and Kiryat Shmona in particular.

"The feeling that it will happen again is there. I think it will because this is what has been happening for 30 years," said Yosef Waknin, who has been living in Kiryat Shmona since 1964. Despite his conviction that another round of rocket attacks on Kiryat Shmona is only a matter of time, Waknin, who runs a cafe just off the main street and is better known locally as "Jo-Jo," maintains, in apparent contradiction, that the region is one of the safest in the country.

"We have the army guarding us and I feel that we are safer here than anywhere else. It's also one of the nicest parts of the country."

IN TERMS of development, however, Kiryat Shmona lags behind the rest of the country and there are those, like Waknin, who believe that prosperity will only really come about once the threat of the Katyusha rockets and cross border terrorism have been removed once and for all.

"Kiryat Shmona has been neglected virtually since it was founded in the 1950s. There's no other city in the country where the main road is only eight meters wide," said Waknin. "When there is peace and quiet here, investors will come and the whole place will blossom and bloom. There will be hotels, because this is a good place for tourism, as well as industry," he said.

According to local residents, the signs of prosperity are illusory and some believe that the new shopping mall will either succeed and put others out of business, or fail because there are not enough customers to go around.

Mayor Prosper Azran believes

the solution lies in doubling the population of Kiryat Shmona, which has remained static at around 22,000 for the past few years, as well as increasing the number of jobs.

In this respect, he is at odds with the government. According to Azran, there was an agreement with the government that military industries in the region would be given preference for Defense Ministry jobs even if their tenders were as much as 15 percent more than other factories which had bid for the work. "This has now been canceled. Now all the factories in the confrontation line will have a prob-

The number of residents who have left Kiryat Shmona permanently as a result of the bombardments is about equal to the number of newcomers.

lem because they will lose the bids," said Azran. "In such a case, what will happen to the workers? Will they be laid off and sent home?"

He maintained that the government also had a policy to promote tourism to the region but had only given approval for the construction of one hotel, even though proposals for three had been put forward.

"It's already a miracle that three entrepreneurs want to build hotels in Kiryat Shmona. The government, however, has insisted on only giving one the approval and that one has been prevaricating because of the security situation."

The other two want to go ahead, despite everything, but

the government won't give approval for them until the first hotel has been completed."

Yet Azran did not take part in last week's demonstrations by other members of the forum of Heads of Confrontation Line Communities against proposed budget cuts and to press the government to honor commitments, made after Operation Grapes of Wrath, to give the north special assistance.

AZRAN EXPLAINED that he had been too busy fighting a rear-guard action on the home front, in terms of the municipality's budget, and trying to ensure that there would be enough money to pay the March salaries of employees.

"We were always careful to ensure that there was never a big deficit on the budget but now we are NIS 25 million in arrears, directly as a result of Operation Grapes of Wrath," he said. "This is likely to rise to NIS 40 million in a year's time unless we receive the financial aid we were promised," said Azran. In any case, the government has played down the complaints, maintaining it is doing all in its power to abide by and implement the decision of the previous administration to give the region additional aid.

DESPITE THE economic and security problems which have afflicted Kiryat Shmona over the years, there are those residents for whom the town is "the be all and end all." Habiba Biton, 86, is one of them. She remained in Kiryat Shmona, living underground in the public bomb shelter for most of the time, throughout Operation Grapes of Wrath, even when Katyusha rockets fell in the vicinity of her home.

On the last day of the fighting, minutes before the American-brokered ceasefire took effect, a Katyusha rocket hit two of the homes in the block where she lives, just three doors down.

There was nobody in the apartments where the rocket exploded because the residents had been evacuated. They returned to find their homes in ruins and some of the contents damaged beyond repair.

Biton, a widow, remained steadfast throughout and was equally adamant a year later. "I have lived here most of my life," she said, "and I have no intention of leaving, whatever happens."



Brig.-Gen. David Tzur, Israel's representative on the monitoring committee.

(IDF Spokesman)

Grapes of Wrath exactly one year ago with a stunning show of pinpoint bombings. It fired over 20,000 shells as it hunted down Hizbullah rocket launchers and forced hundreds of thousands of Lebanese to flee northward. It was a war of luxury with no IDF casualties. But it took just one miscalculated shell which killed over 100 refugees huddled in the presumed sanctuary of a UN base to turn the world against Israel and to

where there is Israeli-Syrian contact," Steinberg said.

"It is relatively successful for what it set out to do. The fact that there are meetings is important and is a way of discussing and generating a more specific set of rules of what is acceptable in war."

Amir Oren, a respected military analyst from Ha'aretz, called the monitoring group a "small success amid a large failure." The success-

Tzur said the French, in his eyes, were fair in general. He took a piece of paper and drew a circle.

"We sit at a round table. The Americans sit here, then the Syrians, the Lebanese, Israel and the French. They didn't want us to sit next to the Americans."

THE MONITORING group has met 15 times since it first con-

Continued on Page 9

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Rebuilding a life



Kiryat Shmona residents Yossi and Hanni Himi: A long road to recovery. (Avim Shapira/Israel Sun)

Hanni Himi still has a piece of shrapnel lodged in her head from the Katyusha rocket that exploded next to her. One year later, she has not fully recovered her memory, David Rudge reports

ODDS

Continued from Page 8

On August 8, Israel has filed 13 complaints and the Lebanese 11. The last meeting took place a month ago after Israel protested against a car bomb explosion near the village of Markaba, just 220 meters from the international border, which wounded an IDF soldier, a woman and her two children. After meeting for seven-and-a-half hours, the committee issued a statement calling on all sides to refrain from attacking civilians and did not specifically blame anyone.

However, it has in the past issued statements blaming sides for attacks, but never for violating the agreement. Israel was blamed for shelling the village of Safed el-Batikh injuring 13 civilians last October.

Tzur explained that each side wants to appear to be honoring the

Lebanon is represented by Colonel Maher Tafil, head of army intelligence in south Lebanon, who probably files complaints from Hizbullah.

The Syrians, represented by Staff Brigadier Adnan Balloul, deputy head of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, do not submit complaints and see themselves as observers.

According to Tzur, the Syrians are playing according to the rules. "I think that the Syrians understand the benefits of the understandings. I don't know what will be in the future. From now on, each party has a common interest in going on with this understanding and monitoring group," Tzur said.

"It is having an effect. You can see it on the ground. If you count how many Israeli civilians were injured a year before the Grapes of Wrath and then count how many have been wounded this year... I think none. On the other side there is a big reduction of

The fact that Hanni Himi survived the Katyusha rocket that exploded alongside her car, setting it ablaze with her unconscious inside, is due to a combination of courage and fortuity.

It was bad luck in the first place that she just happened to be in that particular place, just 200 meters from her home in Kiryat Shmona, at that time, shortly after the start of Operation Grapes of Wrath last April.

Her husband, Yossi, former deputy mayor and now head of the Likud opposition on the town council, prefers to describe what happened afterwards as a series of miracles.

"It was Friday April 12, just after 10 a.m. I will never forget that date or what occurred as long as I live," said Yossi, speaking at his office at the Delgii cosmetics products factory on Kiryat Shmona's industrial estate.

"We were both at home at the time. It had been quiet for a few days after the rocket attacks that preceded the operation against Hizbullah.

"Hanni rang up the local grocery store to see if it was open and went out for groceries, including fish, for Shabbat. It was just after the end of Pessah.

"She went in the car. She was usually very strict about wearing a seat belt, but this time she didn't. That also helped save her life.

"Hanni had only just left when I heard and felt the explosion. It was very loud, very strong and very close. I knew instantly that Hanni had been hurt. I put on some shoes and raced outside."

From his angle of view as he ran into the road, Yossi could not see her car, only the smoke billowing upwards. "A neighbor shouted that it was a parked car that had been hit, but I told him it was Hanni," he said.

By the time he reached the scene, a matter of a scant minutes, Hanni had already been pulled from the blazing wreck by policeman FSM David Buhbut and another neighbor. Both later received citations for bravery.

"I haven't got the words to express my feelings of gratitude to them. But for them, Hanni would have been burned to death in the car," said Yossi.

"Then there was another miracle. A cameraman who was there and was filming what had happened saw that she was choking to death. He put down the camera and pulled her tongue out. That also saved her life.

Even so, it appeared at the outset that Hanni would not survive. Apart from injuries from the blast, her body had been peppered by shrapnel from the rock-

et, including fragments that had entered her head, damaging the brain.

Yossi, 46, accompanied his wife in the IAF helicopter to Haifa's Rambam Hospital after she had received initial treatment at Magen David Adom's front-line emergency ward in Kiryat Shmona. The prognosis was not good.

"The doctors told me that her condition was very grave. I understood that her chances of survival were very slim," Yossi contacted their two children, Miri, now 18, and Omer, now 15, who had both seen what had happened on TV.

"Miri was in Haifa and Omer had been on a trip to the Golan. I managed to get in touch with them and they came to the hospital, along with all the family and friends. Everybody rallied round, offering to help, the staff at the hospital, everybody," said Yossi.

Seemingly against all the odds, Hanni pulled through. After a week of waiting, Yossi was told by the doctors at Rambam that her condition was stabilizing, although she remained in a coma.

"They told me, however, that she would not return to herself and that the center of her understanding and voice had probably been damaged. When she left Rambam after over three weeks of treatment, she was still paralyzed from the waist down," said Yossi.

The next eight months were spent in recuperation and rehabilitation at Beit Levinstein where Hanni learned how to walk and talk again, to control her bodily functions and become re-acquainted with her husband of 23 years and their two children.

She returned home permanently just three months ago, still bearing visible scars of her brush

with death, as well as a piece of shrapnel lodged behind her forehead which has not been removed.

There were no fatalities in the rocket attacks on Kiryat Shmona a year ago, although more than 270 people received medical treatment, 17 of them for light injuries caused by shrapnel and the remainder for shock. Hanni was among three of those who were badly hurt.

HANNI TAUGHT at the Korczak elementary and junior-high school in Kiryat Shmona before her injuries. She has returned to school where she helps the assistants and the school secretary.

Being at the school, among the children and her colleagues, helping sometimes in the handicraft lessons, is also part of the

rehabilitation process. School principal Shosh Shemer and the education department were only too glad to have her back and try to help her regain her life.

"She is part of the family at our school. We couldn't think of her not being here after everything she has done for the children and the school," said Shemer.

"She helps the art teachers and we have started to gradually bring her into the first-grade classes, with the teacher, so she will be in an environment with the children again.

"We hope that one day she will be able to teach again," said Shemer.

Hanni herself remembers little of her past life. Most of her knowledge, according to Yossi, has been learned since the explosion.

"Everything is blurred and fuzzy and muddled up," said Hanni, speaking quietly but clearly. "I think I remember the Katyusha rocket explosion, but not everything that I went through," she said.

"I suppose that there was a stage when I didn't think I would wake up. Sometimes I ask myself why it happened to me, just at that time in that place.

"Yossi and the children have helped me a lot, and so has being here at the school with the children. Being at home helps me to remember, but it's still hazy because everything was wiped out of my memory.

"I remember having been at school before but it's all very distant, as if it was a long, long time ago and far away.

"Now I see the children and I feel I want to be a teacher again, to help educate and train them. That's my aim now." Hanni said that returning to her home in Kiryat Shmona had been an emotional experience, but she was not frightened. "I suppose you can say that I'm living proof that life goes on. Nothing will make me move from here. Not Katyusha rockets or anything else, not having been given my life back like a present," she said.

For Yossi and the children, the rehabilitation process has been long, slow and arduous. "Hanni was the pillar of the family. Now we have had to rally around her," he said.

"There are still things that she is learning anew. It's difficult, but we are together. I have my wife back, the children have their mother. We are a family and despite all the problems, that counts for a lot."

Now, with the Syrian track frozen, the monitoring group is the only official body where Syrian and Israeli delegates actually meet face-to-face.

understandings and, after an incident, makes efforts to improve the situation on the ground.

Leading the US and French delegations are diplomats supported by military advisers, whereas the Israeli, Lebanese and Syrian delegations are led by the military officers. This was because Beirut and Damascus didn't want it to be a substitute for the peace process. France's representatives on the committee are Foreign Ministry official Jean-Michel Gaussoit and General Le Mes Despes. The Americans are represented by David Greenlee, a former political adviser in the Pentagon and Gen. (ret.) Jim Wilson.

Tzur described how in the beginning the complaints from each side were told to the Americans or French who relayed them to the Lebanese and Syrians sitting around the very same table. But now they talk directly.

"This is how it works: If there is an action which either the Israelis or Lebanese feel is a violation of the understandings, then a complaint is filed with the Americans and French based in Nicosia. The complaint must be filed within 24 hours of an event. If deemed valid, a meeting is called, usually about 36 hours later. Tzur and the rest of the Israeli delegation fly to the north and then drive over the border to the UNIFIL base in Naqura.

The Syrians and Lebanese refused to drive since it would mean traveling through "occupied territory," so they are ferried in from Beirut on an Italian helicopter.

The meetings are usually held in the evening and if they stretch past midnight, the pilots don't fly them back and the delegates find themselves laying their heads on their arms on the round table until dawn.

ACCORDING TO Tzur, it is the diplomats who enter into long debates about wording, "especially the Lebanese and the Syrians, they like to argue about every word," Tzur said.

civilians or soldiers wounded in military clashes. No doubt about it."

Tzur said that Hizbullah has changed its method of operation due to the understandings, with less firing and more use of road-side charges or antitank rockets. Hizbullah never accepted responsibility for the two Katyushas fired into Israel in December and January, most likely because they want to appear to be sticking to the understandings. There were also reports from Lebanon that terrorists from a joint operations team from the Syrian-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine launched the rockets.

In any case, Tzur considers these two incidents as exceptions. Those attacks caused no injuries or property damage and were launched from an area under control of the Lebanese government.

In Beirut, Hizbullah says it remains committed to last April's understandings, but there has been a recent wave of comments by the organization's leaders threatening retaliatory Katyusha rocket attacks on Galilee if any more Lebanese civilians are hurt as a result of actions by the IDF or its ally, the SLA.

However, Tzur said: "We are committed to the understandings. I don't see us breaching the understandings. If we will have 30 Katyushas on us tomorrow that means that the Hizbullah is not accepting the understandings any more so this is a new game. But, basically, I think the IDF in the last few months has shown a lot of restraint in using artillery.

"According to the understandings, there is no shadow of a doubt that the strongest right is the right to self-defense. We are permitted to use it in nearly every condition. They can claim that it wasn't self-defense and we didn't have to open fire. But no one will accept this. The moment our soldiers are in danger there is no reason why we shouldn't react."

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Patrolling the urban battlefield



Spot check: A policeman stops a truck driver as part of a new traffic safety campaign launched this week. (Dana Steman/Israel Sun)

Truck driver Oleg Tinkelstein seemed bewildered as a police motorcyclist flagged him down near the Ra'anana junction this week. The Russian immigrant handed over his driver's license and other documents from his truck. A moment later, his bewilderment turned to fear as two senior traffic policemen approached. The policeman went to his motorbike to check Tinkelstein's documents and driving record over his walkie-talkie. Everything was in order. Tinkelstein didn't begin to relax

Traffic police are cracking down on irresponsible driving. Raine Marcus accompanied two law enforcers on the highways this week.

until he was told he'd been pulled over only as a random check that's part of a new police campaign designed to increase the police presence on Israel's busiest, most dangerous roads. The project stretches over 700 kilometers countrywide in a joint NIS 15 mil-

lion project by the Transport and Internal Security Ministries and the police. As public concern rises over seemingly endless deaths on the roads, the police are targeting the most troublesome two-thirds of Israel's roads. Spot checks on trucks are a big part of that campaign, since 30 percent of all accidents involve these vehicles, but the police have a lot of other tricks up their sleeves. "The public can expect to see a police vehicle, either marked or unmarked, every seven or 10 kilometers," said National Traffic

Commander Bertie Ohayon. Supt. Avi Shushan of the Central District traffic police is in charge of specific areas in the new campaign, which was launched Tuesday and dubbed Project 700. Shushan reckons Project 700 can slash accidents by 10%. Last year's statistics show that 60% of all traffic accidents occurred on intercity highways, so police have decided to concentrate their efforts on these accident-prone roads. Indeed, in the area around the Ra'anana and Morasha junctions on Tuesday, police cars could be seen every few kilometers, as well as traffic cops astride the latest Harley Davidson and Honda motorbikes.

Just the presence of police vehicles seemed to have a deterrent effect on motorists - those behind the car driven by Shushan and his colleague Supt. Doron Yisraeli were afraid to overtake and made sure they kept their distance. But not all drivers were deterred. Some turning right drove in the shoulder to avoid waiting in traffic jams. That's "a borderline offense," said Shushan. "But we do stop motorists for technical offenses, such as not wearing seat belts, as well as those obviously committing offenses such as speeding or failing to keep their distance from the car in front."

The project, which includes the latest in technological equipment, can also help arrest criminals, car thieves and potential terrorists, Shushan says.

A couple of kilometers up the road from where Tinkelstein was pulled over, a white van with blacked-out windows was parked at the roadside.

To the untrained eye, the van looked harmless enough. Shushan and Yisraeli went to take a closer look at the van. In the windshield was a Marom camera, developed in Israel to monitor not only a vehicle's speed but also to see when a car is too close to the vehicle in front - one of the chief causes of accidents. Inside the van, a policeman sat before a computer screen, which showed vehicles passing the van. They were filmed as they exceeded the

A close call

I left Supts. Avi Shushan and Doron Yisraeli at four o'clock in the afternoon at Sharon sub-district headquarters in Kfar Sava. On my way back to Tel Aviv, I seemed to see police cars everywhere. One signaled to an old car to pull over to the side of the road. Others, with lights flashing, patrolled the highways at the start of the rush hour. The Central District alone, encompassing the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway and the old Tel Aviv-Haifa road, now is patrolled by 12 traffic-police vehicles, instead of the former two.

I made my way onto the two-lane entrance to the Ayalon highway near Herzliya. A car, headlights flashing, was right on my tail. The driver leaned on his horn and his female passenger laughed hysterically at his macho antics. But the inside lane on the highway was full. The driver behind me was close, nudging the bumper of my car, still keeping his horn and laughing. I felt close to death. If I had driven faster, I would have crashed into the car in front. There seemed to be no escape from this lunatic, so I waited for a gap in the traffic while he raged behind me.

Where were those police vans when I needed them? Where was the Marom? Would that driver have behaved in this life-threatening way if he saw uniforms and flashing blue-lights?

It's still too early to tell if Project 700 will have an impact on accidents or tame wild drivers. But even as an experienced driver, I admit that when I take to the roads these days I feel as if I'm heading for the battlefield. Hopefully Cmdr. Bertie Ohayon and his traffic police can save a few lives. - R.M.

speed limit or failed to keep the correct distance from the car in front of them.

The drivers weren't stopped, but that doesn't mean they got away with anything. "They can expect to receive at home a ticket with a fine within 30 days," said Yisraeli.

By 3:30 in the afternoon, 46 cars had been filmed traveling too close to the car in front and six speeding motorists had been captured on tape, too.

All offenses are forwarded to the police's Jerusalem headquarters, which then sends out notices of the fines.

An optional extra to the Marom camera is a wireless printer installed in another police car 2 kilometers down the road. Surprise, surprise!

Just when offenders are speeding down the highway, they are stopped and presented with an on-line print-out recording their vehicle's excessive speed or the narrow distance between it and the narrow vehicle.

Millions of shekels have been spent on laser technology to measure speed and hidden cameras on

police cars and at traffic lights. Both Shushan and Yisraeli emphasize the deterrent effect of having police cars on the roads, and the importance of law enforcement in the war against often fatal accidents.

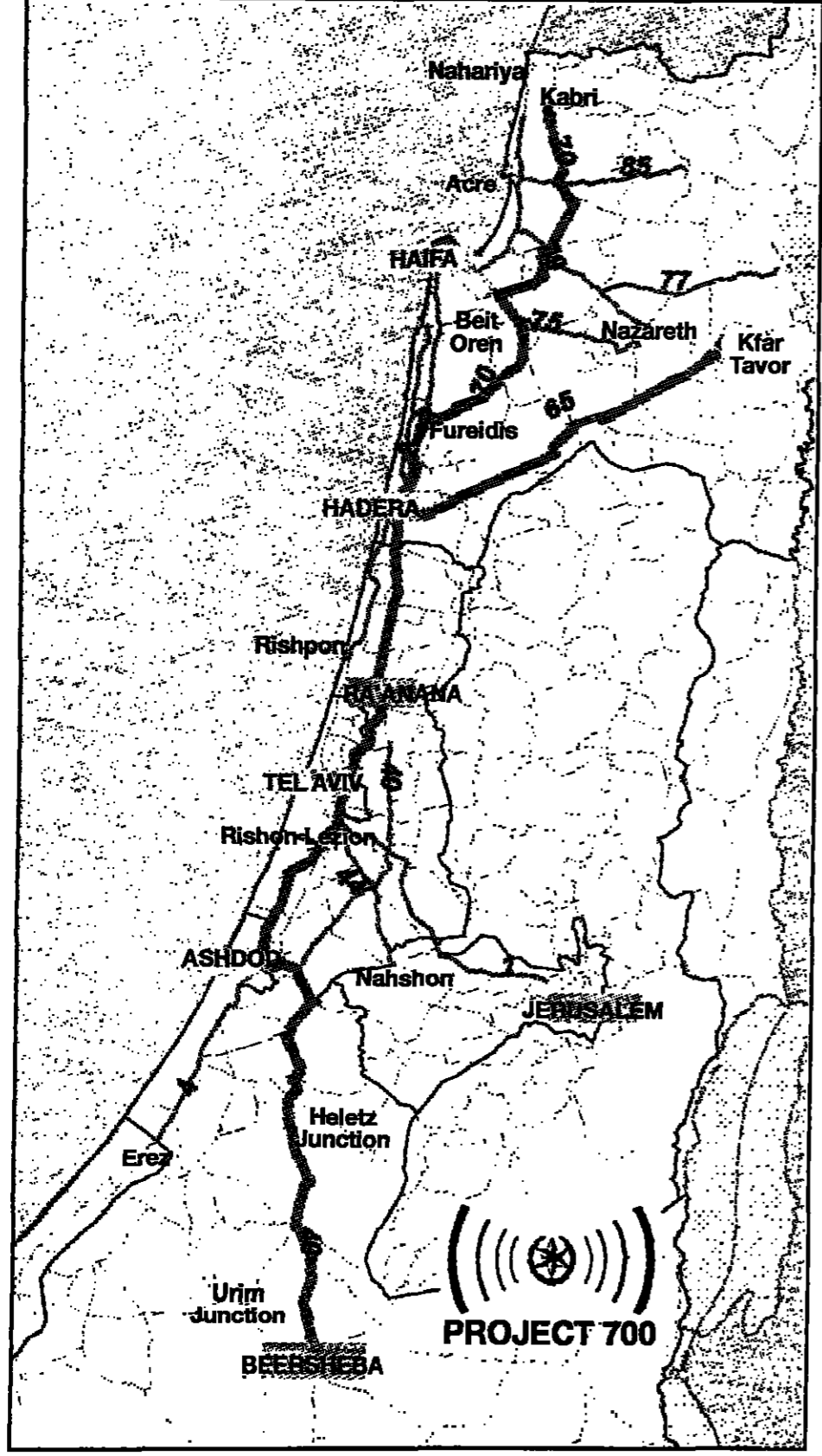
"If drivers see a police car or van every few kilometers, they tend to behave differently," Shushan said. "The police's task is to enforce the law to curtail the death toll and not to educate drivers. Educating drivers is the task of other bodies, but naturally we will work in cooperation with them."

After his initial shock, Tinkelstein the truck driver was happy to cooperate with the police and their spot check. "I think it's good the police are checking out drivers," said Tinkelstein, who drives his truck for a biscuit factory. "I heard there are a lot of car thefts here."

And what of Israeli driving habits? Weighing his words carefully and smiling enigmatically, Tinkelstein said Israeli drivers are similar to motorists in his native Russia.

If that's the case, Shushan may have his work cut out for him.

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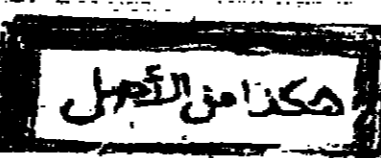
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From Mozart to Klezmer
April 12
Concert at 20:45
Wine and Cheese at 20:00
Yaakov Yakhnin - clarinet,
Gregory Kaplan - violin,
Tania Amstislavsky - piano.
Admission NIS 45/40
Next concert: April 26
An evening of Cantorial Music - songs from the Haggada and Israeli songs.
Cantor Arieh Goldberg, Jerusalem's Great Synagogue and Emmanuel Val - piano.
Note: No concert April 19, Happy Passover.
Museum & Gift Shop open until 22:45
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Department of Land of Israel Studies
C.G. Foundation Jerusalem Project
The public is invited to the conference of the **C.G. Foundation Jerusalem Project**
on
Last Stop Jerusalem: The Place of Jerusalem in Eschatological Expectations
April 13, 1997, Beck auditorium, Bar-Ilan, 10am.
April 14, Beth Bar-Ilan, Jewish Quarter, Old City, Jerusalem, 4 Rehov Shonei Halachot, 10am
Lecturers: Hanan Eshel, Zeev Safrai, Paula Fredriksen, Chana Safrai, Richard Landes, Yvonne Friedman, Isaac Hasson, Daniel J. Lasker, Aviezer Ravitsky, Moshe Hazani, Kurt Weis, Hillel Schwartz, Jeffrey Woolf

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Widely recognized as perhaps Israel's most important security asset, the Golan is for the moment on the back burner. But it won't be there for long. So what better time than now to join Shorashim and The Jerusalem Post for an in-depth, English-speaking two day tour of the area. We'll visit the settlements, examine the security issues and view the terrain, the animals, the water and the beauty.
We'll visit Beit Gavriel on the Kinneret, Mitzpe Shalom (near Kfar Haruv), the yeshiva at Hispin, the wineries at Katzin, the Druse village of Ein Kinya, Emek Habacha, Gamla, and more. Overnight at Kibbutz Kfar Bhum, with a lecture on the wolves of the Golan.
The date: Wednesday/Thursday, April 30/ May 1, 1997.
The price: NIS 595. Includes transportation from Jerusalem or Tel Aviv and back, background lectures and on-the-spot explanations, entrance to all sites, half-board accommodation in a double room, lunch and dinner on the first day, breakfast and lunch-box on the second. Pick-up and drop-off along the route when possible, by prior arrangement.
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DRIVE SLOWER! DRIVE WITH CARE!



MIDDLE ISRAEL



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

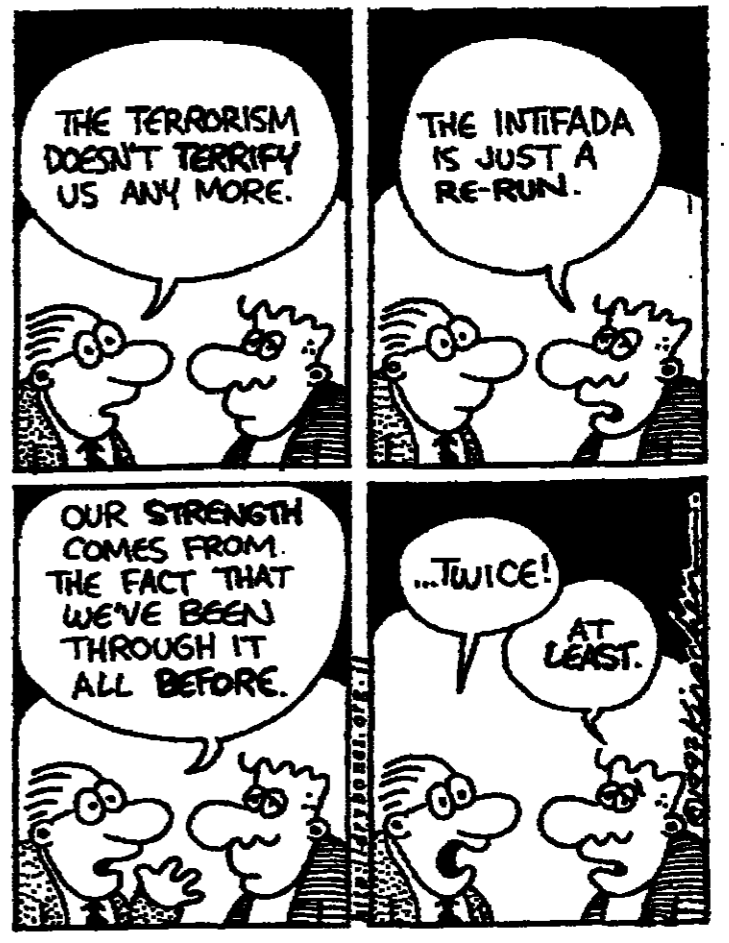
In 1989, when a French diplomat stormed into a meeting hall where European and Arab officials were gathered for trade talks, and jubilantly announced the fall of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, the Europeans at hand reflexively burst into applause while the Arab interlocutors remained solemnly silent, apparently pondering the expanding political gaps between their countries and the rest of the world.

The Losers' League

anachronistic and unrealistic call to freeze ties with Israel and renew the old boycott, in response to the construction at Bar Homa. Conceived by Syria, and led by its secretary-general Esmat Abdel-Meguid, one might have taken the Arab League's whims a bit more seriously had there been any other substantive items on its agenda; but there are none. In fact, 52 years after its establishment, this classic tool of British colonialism can still claim to have done pretty much nothing other than bicker with and over Israel.

force. Not to mention the human-life aspect. Middle Israelis, like this writer, who after returning from Lebanon in 1982 demonstrated against their government's adventures there, are sufficiently sensitive to lend an ear to Arab leaders who decry what they see as an infringement of Palestinian rights. However, when we notice that the chain-saw beheadings of 90 Algerian villagers and the throat-slitting of 50 others just last week, along with the rest of that civil war's 60,000 casualties so far, elicit no remotely similar response, we wonder what the Arab League's real agenda is.

Dry Bones



FUNDS



Turning to crime

I haven't got the exact figures, but I'll bet you that thousands of senior citizens are "breaking the law." How come? Lack of resources, or as they used to say, poverty. Senior citizens used to receive a blue card entitling them to 50 percent discounts on a number of services, including television license fees. The television, for many of our older and lonely citizens, is in "substandard" accommodations, is their only form of "entertainment" and communication with what's happening outside their front door.

- NIS 100 in honor of the wedding of David Kaplan and Eva Kratz - Sue Fishoff, Tel Aviv, Ellen Zwartz-Gerson, Bar Yam, Dr. K. Bruckner, J'im. Anon., Haifa. The Thursday Bridge Players. NIS 73 for my 73rd birthday to honor 73 helicopter victims - Simon Lesser, J'im. NIS 60 Anon. In memory of my husband, Philip Hurwitz, my mother, Bertha Barash and my son-in-law, Yisrael Eilatman - F. Hurwitz, Kibbutz Yasur. NIS 50 in honor of Zelig Sher's 70th birthday - Hazel and Colin Shai-Tal, Elkana, Yosef Mandelkern, J'im. Refuah Shikunich for Hershel Ben-Byrna and Ben-Rachel - Esther Ben-Rachel, J'im. In thanks - Shirley Katz, Tel Aviv. NIS 18 in memory of Rebbetzin Sarah Wachtfogel, Philadelphia and J'im. - The Family. \$120 in honor of the birthday of my dear wife, Shirley - Irving Berger, Berkeley, CA. DM 100 Esther Ludwig-Kupfrian, Kreuznach, Germany. DM 50 Alexander Reiblan, Frankfurt, Germany. New Progress Totals NIS 2,826 NIS 48,011 \$120 \$16,053 (other currencies converted into shekels)

A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHN

You're fighting a losing battle," a colleague told me. He was referring to the verbal persecution to which I and other nudniks like me subject mediocrats and propagandists who peddle lies and distortions about the eight-decade-old bloody Arab-Jewish conflict. I replied that this conflict is one in which our lives - the lives of individual Jews and the life of the Jewish state - are at stake, so we must keep on resisting.

Lies, distortions and fantasies

Meanwhile, knowing how consistently unreliable NG has been regarding the subject we know so well, I wonder how much credence we ought to give its coverage of other subjects. Information banned the importation of the book, complaining "of an enormous anti-Arab bias." For example, it requested the deletion of "lines like '1969: Terrorists act against Israel increase.'" CNN's RIZ Khan is one of the more intelligent and fair television anchors. He hosts CNN's Question & Answer program in which he interviews public figures and refers to them questions phoned, faxed, or e-mailed to Atlanta, CNN's home, by viewers from all over the world.

who today identify themselves as Palestinian. MANY ISRAELI Arabs participated in the March 30 anti-Israel Land Day demonstrations. Israel TV showed one group of them marching to the chant, in Arabic: "Awake, awake, O Palestine! / Zionists, leave our soil!" THE BRITISH authorities tried "to maintain amicable relations between" the Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine. This fantasizes Robert Stewart in The Illustrated Almanac of Historical Facts from the Dawn of The Christian Era to the New World Order (Prentice Hall). That may be a New Age fact, but it is largely a historical fiction. Stewart goes on to tell us that despite those alleged British efforts, "terrorism and rioting approached open warfare by 1938." He is referring to the so-called "Arab revolt" or "Disurbances" of 1936-1939.

SHABBAT SHALOM



By SHLOMO RISKIN

"And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 'When a man [adam] shall have in the skin of his flesh a swelling, a scab or bright spot, and it be ... the plague of tzara'at.'" (Lev. 13:1-2) In order for an individual to be deemed righteous, is it necessary that he never commit a serious sin? A difficult expression in this week's Torah portion sheds light on the true definition of righteousness.

Righteous sinner

adam. Adam was the most Godlike of all human beings, and the use of the word adam recalls him - hardly the way we'd refer to a sinner. Rabbi Nissim Alpert, of Yeshiva University, once explained this usage to me. We generally attribute greatness to a person if we believe he or she is free of character defects; but every rational being knows that there is no person who has not sinned! Greatness depends on recognizing one's weaknesses and striving to improve. From this vantage point, the worst sin is that of complacency and the most significant mitzva is repentance. A skin malady can easily be covered up. Calling him adam is how the Torah lets us know that the sufferer has nonetheless recognized an inner fault, and seeks help. Support for this approach can be found two verses later: "The priest shall confine [shut up] the plague seven days..." (Lev. 13:4). According to Rashi, this means that the afflicted individual must be isolated. But the Tur, quoting his father the Rosh, points out that the phrase v'hisgir et hanega refers to the plague and not to the person. Had the Torah wanted us to isolate the person, the grammatical form should have been nagan'a, and not nega, as our text reads. Hence the Tur understands that the scab was isolated from the rest of the body by having a special dye applied to the infected area. Marking the exact spot allowed the priest at the next examination to determine whether the scab had spread - expansion being the grounds for declaring impurity. But how did Rashi understand the fact that the biblical usage is "plague" (nega) rather than "the one who was afflicted" (nagu'a)? If indeed the Torah means that the person was to be confined, why doesn't it say so explicitly? Rashi may have understood that a person should not be defined by his sins. He may have a nega (plague), but we dare not describe him only as "the nugu'a" (the one afflicted). Obviously you can't isolate the nega without taking along the person affected, but the wording implies that we have to make a distinction between the plague and the one who is plagued. This concept clarifies the difference between a religious sinner that burdens mankind with original sin as opposed to one that recognizes the possibility (and even necessity) of sin while never forgetting the potential for redemption. The lives of King David and King Saul illustrate these two approaches. Both committed sins, and yet their stamp on history is justly different. Saul committed the almost understandable sins of impatience and misdirected compassion, and yet the kingship was torn away from him. In contrast, David seemingly committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed in battle, but is nevertheless regarded as the prototype for the Messiah. The difference lies in the reaction of each to the one who chastised him. Saul's sins seem mild in comparison to David's. When the prophet Samuel questioned his lack of patience and resolution, Saul explained: "Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you came not within the days appointed..." (1 Samuel 13:11). It was their fault, it was your fault - but it wasn't my fault, he seemed to say. Saul's second sin involved misplaced compassion for the king of Amalek and their possessions. Saul had been warned by Samuel to kill King Agag and obliterate all the livestock. Yet he saved the king's life - as well as the healthy cattle. When confronted by Samuel, he first duplicitously declared that he had carried out God's command and then lamely attempted to justify his looting of the livestock by describing it as "the compassion of the nation ... in order to make sacrifice to the Lord your God" (ibid. 15: 13-15). Compare these self-serving justifications to David's heart-wrenching repentance. Indeed, David's crime was the more heinous; driven by sexual pas-

- FORSAKE ME NOT NIS 550 Anon., Beit Shemesh. NIS 210 in honor of Marjitz Spitz's special birthday - Ju and Max Druisbecher, J'im. NIS 200 Sarah Holzman, Proceeds from the Sunday afternoon Bridge game with: Mona Bear, Sybil Seltzer, Edna Tolkin, Marcia Ostroff and Dora Garb. Anon., J'im. NIS 180 Anon., Patah Tikva. NIS 125 Anon., J'im. WELCOME HOME FUND NIS 60 Anon. NIS 18 in memory of Rebbetzin Sarah Wachtfogel, Philadelphia and J'im. - The Family. Can\$15 Terence and Joanna Miller, Markham, Canada. New Progress Totals NIS 114 NIS 7,666 (other currencies converted into shekels)

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In these times you cannot AFFORD to be without THE JERUSALEM POST INTERNATIONAL EDITION

THE WEEK THAT WAS

A familiar routine for Netanyahu

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

The routine is getting familiar. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is summoned ("invited" in diplomatic language) to Washington "in a last-ditch effort to avert the crisis threatening to destroy the peace process."

The media work up a froth of speculation on what President Bill Clinton will tell Netanyahu; analysts ponder the amount of "pressure" necessary to drive him back from the wilds of Har Homa to the Oslo track.

There were straws in the wind. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright took a firm tone at her meeting with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, making clear her displeasure over the construction in the settlements.

Netanyahu, too, played his familiar role - scoffing incredulously at all the speculation, which he called "a media invention."

The United States has no intention of "pressuring" Israel and "we don't work in an atmosphere of pressure."

After the meeting with Clinton, Netanyahu emerged smiling with confidence, issuing the ready-made statements that "there were no pressures, no threats."

"I just restated our principles - building in Har Homa will continue and building in the settlements will continue."

The meeting was "good,

friendly and effective" between "two friendly states and partners and two leaders with a similar cause." To watch him slipping through his repertoire of sound bites it was almost believable that there was no crisis, no threat to the peace process, no possibility of the home front sliding back to guns and stones and blood.

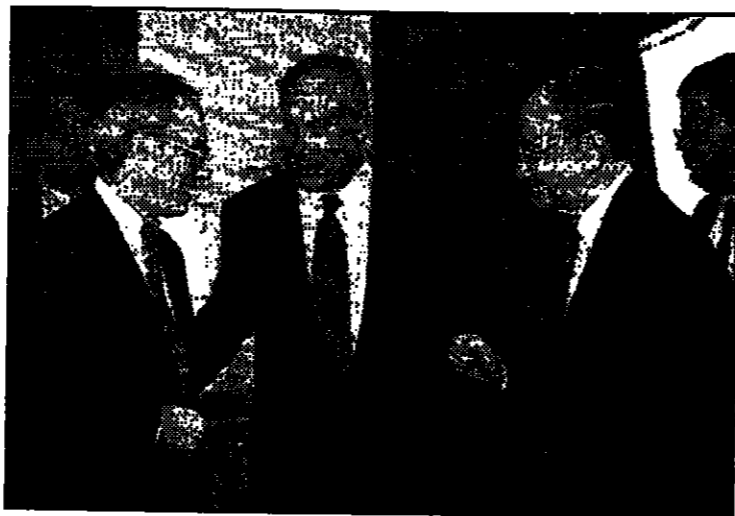
It was barely noticed that a grim-faced Clinton described the talks as "honest, open and lengthy." But as long as the Americans seemed willing to preserve diplomatic decorum, Netanyahu's version remained undisputed.

Well, there's always the back door where the real news emerges. Sure enough and on cue the following day, the American media came out with the real Washington evaluation from their White House sources. As in the past, it bore little resemblance to the official Israeli line.

The summit failed, concluded the leading American newspapers. "No progress" in a "process that isn't moving." The meeting between Netanyahu and Clinton was "harsh."

No agreement was reached and the fate of the peace process is shrouded in dangerous uncertainty. Clinton failed in all efforts to return Israel and the Palestinians to the negotiating table, said Washington.

Spokesman Nicholas Burns described the Clinton-Netanyahu



Prime Minister Netanyahu tries to woo American Reform and Conservative Jewish leaders.

talks in stripped-down and unvarnished terms, eschewing any diplomatic niceties such as "optimistic" or "positive."

The Washington sources said that although they had slashed their expectations of Netanyahu to a bare minimum, he still did not agree to a single request from Clinton to get the peace process back on civil terms.

Within hours these detailed reports appeared in the Israeli media.

For all the criticism of journalists, the reports proved once again that even faulty media can be trusted more than smooth-talking politicians to tell the truth.

YEAH YEAH, BROTHER

Another "information" campaign which fell flat on its face was Netanyahu's attempt to woo American Reform and Conservative Jewish leaders a week after the Knesset's first reading of the "conversion law."

These leaders, representing some 90 percent of American Jewry, were fuming. The law disqualifies their conversions in Israel, undermines their rabbis' authority, and in effect classifies them as second-class Jews.

They were waiting anxiously to see if Netanyahu would make any effort to rehabilitate their confidence in Israel. He was

invited to be the main speaker at their convention. Pleading a too-heavy schedule, he declined.

The schedule was not too heavy, however, for him to appear at a fundamentalist Christian Bible Belt rally, where he was assured of a warm welcome. "These Christians don't need the Lubavitcher Rebbe," commented *Yediot Aharonot's* Nahum Barnea.

"They can be satisfied with a fluent synthetic messiah like our Bibi. They treated him as they do their tele-messiahs, with cries of 'yeah, yeah,' applause, and a raising of hands." Netanyahu did meet a group of 15 Reform and Conservative rabbis, but failed to convince them of the need to impose an Orthodox conversion law in a democratic state.

"If Israel wishes to be the center of the Jewish world, it must be Jewish; it cannot afford to be Orthodox," Dr. Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, told him.

But Reform and Conservative leaders hope the conversion law may yet turn to their advantage. Some Jewish federations have already decided to divert their contributions from the United Jewish Appeal and Jewish Agency directly to Reform and Conservative institutions in Israel.

The leaders think that until now Jewish American money went mostly to finance what one called a "corrupt, coercive and anti-democratic religious establishment." Perhaps it can now be used to finance an education network, day-care centers and cultural activities, said local Reform and Conservative rabbis.

GRAPEVINE

Cutting a fine figure

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

An international mayoral conference is obviously a much more formal affair in the Czech Republic than it is in Israel. This would explain why Pilsen Mayor Zdenek Prosek was the only person at the opening reception of the 17th Jerusalem Conference of Mayors wearing a wing-collared shirt, black bow-tie and a satin-faced shawl-collared tuxedo. Although he cut a very fine figure, the guest exciting just a little more attention was former Miss Venezuela, Irene Saez, who is currently mayor of Chacao.

AN AILING Teddy Kollek climbed out of his wheelchair to stand at the microphone to pay tribute to deceased photojournalist Tim Gidal on the opening night of the Jerusalem International Book Fair. A posthumous exhibition of Gidal's work demonstrates his uncanny talent for synthesizing news with art. Ilan Greenfield, one of the directors of Gefen Publishing House which sponsored the show, said that when he had first met Gidal he had decided not to work with him because he was too demanding. Since then, Gefen had published two of Gidal's 23 books. Others present included Gidal's wife and partner Pia, fellow photographer and Israel Prize laureate David Rubinger, publishers Eri Stelmatsky and Racheli Edelman, Cinematheque director Lis Van Leer and Fred Gronick, who served with Kollek in the War of Independence.

happily embraced Stefan Grajek, head of the World Federation of Polish Jews, at a reception hosted by Polish Ambassador Wojciech Adamiecki. Bardoszewski, whom Grajek calls "the symbol of humanity," was imprisoned by the Communists in the early 1980s. He was released when Grajek, who was in Poland to deliver an address at the commemoration ceremony of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, refused to speak while he remained incarcerated.

Also amongst the hundreds present at the reception were artist Josef Bau, one of the Jews on



Sexier than Bibi: Pinna Rosenblum's head for business may lead her into politics. (Hanoch Grinitzky/Israel Sun)

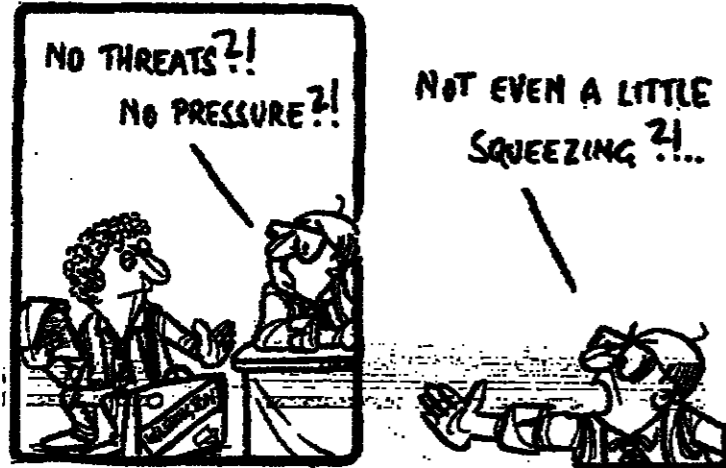
Schindler's list, Israel's ambassador-designate to Poland Yigal Antebi, Mordechai Paltruz, Israel's first ambassador to Poland after the resumption of diplomatic ties, and Peretz Unikowski, president of the Israel-Poland Friendship League.

NOW THAT she's proved that she's got a good head for business, former model and cosmetics queen Pinna Rosenblum has announced her intention to throw her hat into the political arena. She is set to run as an independent in the next elections.

Believing herself to be more capable than Benjamin Netanyahu, she may even aim for the premiership. She has a lot more sex appeal than any of his other opponents. The question is: will she use it on the campaign trail?

WE LOVED to hate her as Queen Bitch Alexis Carrington in *Dynasty*, and now we're going to be treated to a new dose of Joan Collins's canine charisma in *Pacific Palisades*. The ever glamorous and age-defying Collins will have a lead role in the new soap opera but for the time being her character is under wraps.

SRULIK



TIME WARP

Cosmologists speculate that the arrow of time moves forward and it may be impossible to go backwards. You could have fooled Israelis.

Riots in Hebron, television screens filled with infatigable scenes of stones and rubber bullets. Along the way, three Palestinians were killed and over a hundred were wounded, as were dozens of Israelis.

Surely the nation was hurtling back down some tunnel of time towards the 1980s while the rest of the world began a 1,000-day countdown to the new millennium. Amidst the smoke clouds, rocks and gunfire OC Intelligence Maj.-Gen Moshe "Boogie" Ya'alon and Palestinian security chief Jibril Rajoub exchanged accusations.

And the prime minister? He zipped back from Washington for long enough to pick up the wife and kids and headed off again to Europe.

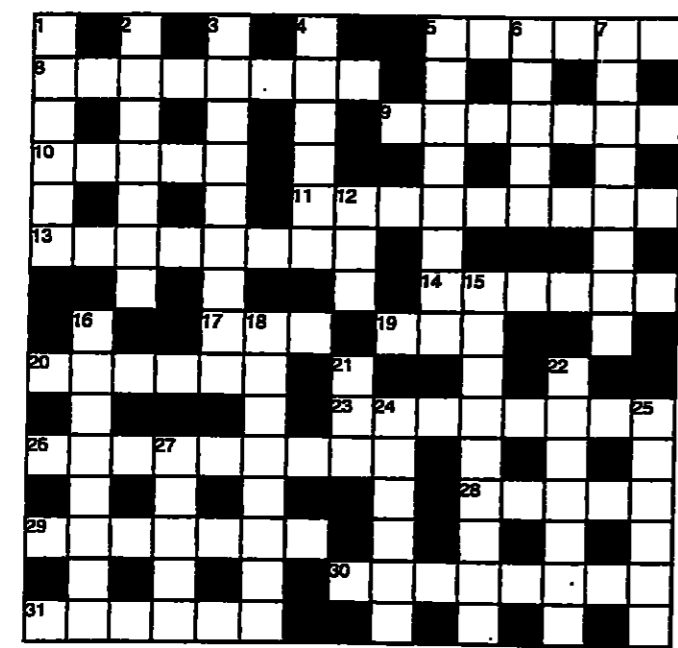
BRITISH AMBASSADOR David Manning, together with Harley Brookes, director of the British Council, hosted a reception to honor British participants in the Jerusalem Book Fair, in particular, Frank Cass, whose company is celebrating 40 years of publishing. Urging British publishers to "keep fighting the screen," Manning, who loves books, welcomed the opportunity to get away from his desk.

Recalling that these receptions had been started by Manning's immediate predecessor, Andrew Burns, Cass observed that Burns had a brother-in-law who was a publisher, whereas Manning has a wife who is an author. Cass's projection for the future of the book was "another hundred years at least."

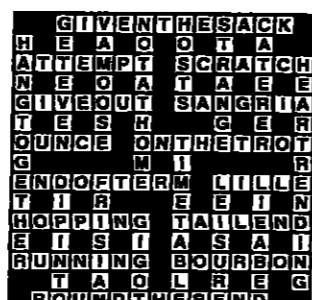
RIGHTEOUS GENTILE and former Polish foreign minister Wladyslaw Bardoszewski, whose books were on display at the Polish stand at the Jerusalem Book Fair,

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 5 Smart kind of beer (6)
 - 8 What about hooter that may blossom? (8)
 - 9 Sense and Sensibility (7)
 - 10 Loafer hiding in torrid Lerida (5)
 - 11 Pair of drawers with one swinging leg? (9)
 - 13 Bear twins and think nothing of it (4-4)
 - 14 Man is one, notwithstanding Donne's assertion (6)
 - 17 Dated half-dollar changed (3)
 - 19 Fitting Pat out (3)
 - 20 Fair game for band visiting city (4-2)
 - 23 Sailor given various chores in Welsh resort (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 Small child carrying a pair of pincers (6)
 - 2 South Wales shortly to be given grant to drink (7)
 - 3 Eddy's giddiness over Kitty? (9)
 - 4 Forces affecting painting on walls (6)
- 5 Means to keep the Cotswolds clean (5-3)**
- 6 Reversible parts? (5)**
- 7 Interests in business-houses (8)**
- 12 Lawman of resistance? (3)**
- 15 Plot second party policy (5,4)**
- 16 Rather a lot, eh? (8)**
- 18 Tiller girls in the second row? (4,4)**
- 21 Common glass of beer can be a shock (3)**
- 22 Novel Menorca resort (7)**
- 24 Taking the car, not the principal way (6)**
- 25 Intense dislike of biretta, say, on cardinal (6)**
- 27 Go beyond forty in Rome, would you say? (5)**

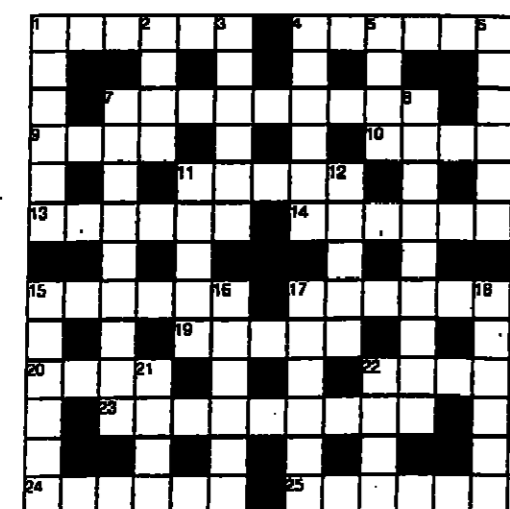


SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Jamb, 3 Tomorrow, 9 Algal, 10 Otheer, 11 Sag, 13 Otravise, 14 Coedder, 15 Aditb, 18 Proxindly, 20 Dud, 22 Thilal, 23 Tansa, 25 Lurgassa, 26 Spar.
DOWN: 1 Jansa, 2 Ming, 4 Oporto, 5 Othand, 6 Rectified, 7 Warmest, 8 Cho, 13 Gondoller, 14 Capital, 15 Orlisa, 17 Slicia, 19 Yoti, 21 Drear, 24 Nip.

QUICK CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1 Riches (6)
 - 4 Sang through close lips (6)
 - 7 Knick-knacks (4-1-4)
 - 9 Eye infection (4)
 - 10 Pillage (4)
 - 11 Gem from oyster (5)
 - 13 In recent times (6)
 - 14 Frame of mind (6)
 - 15 Paralyse (6)
 - 17 Broad street (6)
 - 19 Army chaplain (5)
 - 20 Lecherous look (4)
 - 22 Finished (4)
 - 23 Formal party (9)
 - 24 Consternation (6)
 - 25 Songbird (6)
- DOWN**
- 1 Sly person (6)
 - 2 Collective knowledge (4)
 - 3 Ball game (6)
 - 4 Capital of Tasmania (6)
 - 5 Repeat (4)
 - 6 Medical practitioner (6)
 - 7 Onlooker (9)
 - 8 Comrade (9)
 - 11 Chubby (5)
 - 12 Depart (5)
 - 15 Narrative song (6)
 - 16 Bread-shop (6)
 - 17 Extremely cold (6)
 - 18 Vigour (6)
 - 21 20 quires (4)
 - 22 Soft feathers (4)

L'expression personnelle



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BUSINESS & FINANCE

HIGH TECH

in brief

Alex. Brown delegation arrives in Israel

A special Alex. Brown delegation arrived in Israel earlier this week, headed by president Mayo A. Shamuk III. Alex. Brown and Giza are jointly hosting a conference for Israeli growth companies in the technology, communications and medical fields. Giza, a Tel Aviv-based investment bank, represents Alex. Brown's activity in Israel.

Alex. Brown serves as the investment banker for Scitex and ECI Telecom, and was involved in ECI's acquisition of Telesat and Scitex's acquisition of its digital video and digital print divisions.

ECI Telecommunications reiterated 'buy'

ECI Telecommunications reiterated a "buy" by Lehman Brothers. ECI of Petah Tikva develops digital telecommunications equipment. The company recently announced a \$58m. deal with British Telecom, an estimated \$30m. sole supplier agreement with Belgian Belgacom and its participation in a \$60m. joint venture in China.

Geotek responds to recent drop in share price

Geotek Communications Inc., a New Jersey-based company with local R&D facilities, said in a statement that it "knows of no fundamental reason for the recent decline in [its] stock price." The company said that the recent 13% drop in share price does not accurately reflect current demand for its products or the fact that the company met its first-quarter targets.

Since the beginning of April, the company's share price has fallen from \$5 to \$4.375. Meanwhile, the company also announced plans to launch a Tampa, Florida network that will concentrate on providing fleet managers with wireless voice and data services. Geotek is targeting more than 22,000 businesses in Tampa.

NetXchange teams up with Netscape

NetXchange Communications has announced that it has teamed up with Netscape to ensure future compatibility between NetXchange's Web fax technology and the Netscape Navigator browser.

Internet Xchange for Fax is now available through the Netscape Navigator browser as well as other Internet access programs. NetXchange's Internet Xchange for Fax allows users to send faxes directly from Netscape Navigator, either from their desktop or a remote location.

Oscar Gruss gives Orckit 'buy' rating

Oscar Gruss & Son Inc. has initiated its coverage of Orckit Communications Ltd. shares with a "buy" recommendation. Orckit's digital subscriber line products are used by telephone firms to provide digital services over existing infrastructure.

Team Computers wins NIS 1.5m. deal

Team Computers won a NIS 1.5 million contract to supply the Health Ministry with a national information system designed for healthcare professionals. Based in Petah Tikva, Team's subsidiaries include TTI Team Telecom International Ltd., which develops software for the telecommunications industry.

Tecnomatix reiterated 'buy'

Lehman Brothers reiterated its "buy" recommendation for Tecnomatix Technologies Ltd. Based in Herzliya, Tecnomatix develops production engineering software.

The company recently announced an agreement with Structural Dynamics Research Corp. to provide software products and maintenance services to the Ford Motor Company. Tecnomatix estimates that the agreement could generate sales of up to \$22m. through 1999. The agreement will generate \$6.8m. in initial revenue. In October, the company signed a \$10m. deal with Mazda Motor of Japan.

Compiled by Jennifer Friedlin

PM's Office: Economic plan must exclude tax hike

Industrialists: Cut budget, raise VAT, reduce interest rates

By DAVID HARRIS and Jerusalem Post Staff

There is no way Israel can afford a new round of tax hikes, despite the economy's slowdown, a senior source in the Prime Minister's Office said yesterday. That statement came as the Bank of Israel reported a further slowing in the economy, the Manufacturers Association offered the government a set of economic suggestions, and the Treasury braced for a week of deliberations that may produce a stimulus package for the sagging economy.

The stance expressed by the Netanyahu aide is believed to represent the prime minister's views, particularly considering the attacks to which he was subjected after raising taxes in the fall in violation of his election promises not to hike taxes.

The slowdown which characterized activity in the industrial, construction and hotel sectors in the closing months of 1996 continued into the first quarter of this year, according to the quarterly Bank of Israel business survey.

The slowdown, which has been mainly registered in domestic demand, has yet to end, even after seasonal factors have been taken into account, added the central bank's research section, which compiled the findings.

In the industrial sector, falling sales were recorded for the second consecutive quarter, with exports having remained steady for the past 12 months.

Those surveyed reported falls in number of employees, stock levels, and equipment utilization.



Propper: Increase VAT. (Dan Ossendryver)

Trading companies spoke of a decline in business, but not one of any significance. Credit-based sales declined a little on the previous quarter, but are still considered to be at a relatively high level.

Building start-ups appear to have decreased, with a large number of companies reporting a decline in demand.

Some 71 percent of hotels reported a decline in usage in comparison to the same period last year. This is the third consecutive quarter in which a decline has been recorded.

These statistics are based on a survey of 609 companies.

Faced with these data, Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper yesterday proposed the government adopt a set of measures aimed at jump-starting the economy. These moves include a sharp interest-rate cut, a universal freeze on public-sector hiring, a propor-



Netanyahu: No new taxes. (Isaac Harari)

tionate budget-cut in all government agencies, and a one-percentage point increase in value added tax, Propper said.

However, Treasury officials say there is no room for fresh cuts in public spending, given the ongoing economic slowdown.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor, Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sbaransky, and Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel are working out their final negotiating positions before the first 1997 economic "summit" meeting between them, slated for the Prime Minister's Office Sunday afternoon.

The three have agreed to meet at the end of each quarter this year to examine the economy as a whole and in particular the budget, to ensure government targets are being met.

Faced with an overall budget deficit in the first quarter of some NIS 1.2 billion (a figure that was revised this week after

earlier published estimates), Treasury staff are concerned a substantial cut will only heighten the economic slowdown, while the Prime Minister's Office believes increasing the tax burden will have the same effect.

While there is a view in the Treasury - most vocally espoused by former director-general David Brodet - that any budget cut can only be made simultaneously with a substantial reduction in interest rates, a senior Bank of Israel source countered yesterday that the two are unrelated. "Interest rates are not part of an economic package, but a way of checking inflation," said the source.

However, Hebrew University public finance Prof. Eitan Sheshinski maintains a combined approach is crucial. The bank must alter interest rates and the exchange rate "in the direction that everyone is speaking of. On the fiscal side, a carefully monitored degree of taxation is required, but only a negligible cut in spending, if at all."

The budget deficit, which comprises a domestic NIS 500 million and a foreign NIS 700m., principally consists of a shortfall in revenues rather than excesses in expenditure. (The foreign deficit matches government predictions and will be offset later in the year by US aid.)

This income should have come from areas which are "a function of growth," such as real-estate taxation, according to Accountant-General Shai Talmon.

This reflects fears in the Prime Minister's Office that increasing taxation will only add to the economic slowdown. While not

openly calling for public-expenditure savings, Netanyahu's advisers will not rule such a move out of hand. "Saying there is no room to cut is very theoretical," said the source in Netanyahu's office. "I'm not saying we will make cuts in defense, education or health. The source of the cut will be discussed only if we decide to cut."

While Frenkel is refusing to offer direct advice in public on fiscal policy, a central bank source said yesterday it is vital for the government's credibility that the deficit is reined in. "For two years the government has failed to meet its deficit targets," said the source.

"Now is the time to start zero budgeting," Hebrew University economist Ephraim Kleiman said yesterday. That would require each ministry to justify every shekel it spends, with their budgets beginning at what is called a zero-base. "Meridor is facing two real problems - he fears that cuts will take the economy, which is jittering on the edge of recession, into a deep recession, and, second, while he supports a cut, none of the other ministers agree," Kleiman said.

The 1997 NIS 190 billion state budget passed on December 31 already includes a NIS 7.2b. deficit-reduction package, two-thirds of which is in cuts and the remainder in increased taxation. The budget is meant to produce an annual deficit of no more than 2.8% of Gross Domestic Product. Initial Treasury and academic estimates, based on the first quarter, put the total 1997 figure at some 3.3% to 3.5% of GDP.

Gov't backs public sector wage limits

By DAVID HARRIS

The government will next week approve the plan to legislate against excessive public sector pay, even if no compromise is reached between the Treasury and the Union of Local Authorities, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's economic adviser Moshe Leon said yesterday.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor and senior Union officials led by Chairman Adi Eldar are scheduled to meet early next week to discuss the Treasury's intention of coming down heavily on public sector employees in receipt of salaries higher than the government-set guidelines allow.

Last Friday's cabinet meeting, at

the request of Prime Minister's Office director-general Avigdor Lieberman, decided to delay approval of Meridor's proposals until the two sides had met. At least three ministers have expressed reservations about the Meridor package: Foreign Minister David Levy, Interior Minister Eli Suissa, and Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy.

Angered by the failure to approve the measures, senior Treasury officials accused Lieberman of placing party politics first, with many of the municipalities in Likud control and local elections just a year away. Lieberman is refusing to comment on the issue.

This, the latest in a series of disputes between the Treasury and pub-

lic sector representatives, was sparked by Labor Agreements Director Yossi Kucik's third annual Public Bodies Salaries Report.

Meridor wants to see the creation of a research body to investigate salary levels in various government funded bodies, a unit of investigators and economists to prepare legal actions, and an inter-ministerial committee to decide on the formulation of fresh legislation.

In practical terms, the Treasury is proposing to withhold grants and funding from bodies. In some instances, credit approval will not be awarded. Sanctions will be imposed on those in breach of the law, including removal from their positions.

Some of these measures can already be enforced with others to be included in the legislation.

The Kucik report, which referred to 1995, highlighted:

- Sixty-two percent of public-sector bodies paid salaries at least 5% higher than the Treasury-set targets. In 1994, that figure was 53%.
- Public-sector wages, especially of senior management, are increasing far too quickly. The country's public sector wage bill totalled NIS 24.2b. in 1995.

The widening gap between the top earners, such as Israel Electric Corporation senior executives earning an average gross salary of NIS 41,310 monthly, and the average wage, which stood at NIS 4,207 in December 1995.

Between 1994 and 1995, public sector wages rose 5.8% in real terms from an average monthly NIS 6,362 to NIS 7,409. Those reporting the largest percentage increases between the two years are the statutory organizations (8.94%), funded bodies such as universities and health funds (8.33%), and the local authorities (6.52%).

The research covered 250,000 employees in local authorities, religious councils, government and council companies, statutory organizations, and city corporations, but does not include the Civil Service, security bodies, and teachers.

The average wage in the Civil Service is at least double that of local authorities, according to Eldar, who is demanding this area be looked into by Kucik.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)				
Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.825	1.825	2.125	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.625	0.750	1.000	
Yen (10 million yen)				

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (10.4.97)					
CURRENCY	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
Currency basket	3.8385	3.6983			3.8696
U.S. dollar	3.3864	3.4207	3.30	3.47	3.3930
German mark	1.9500	1.9517	1.82	2.12	1.9780
Pound sterling	6.4851	5.5333	5.37	5.54	5.4984
French franc	0.5824	0.5818	0.57	0.61	0.5876
Japanese yen (100)	2.6888	2.7117	2.62	2.75	2.6971
Dutch florin	1.7422	1.7703	1.71	1.80	1.7589
Swiss franc	2.2854	2.2524	2.24	2.38	2.3058
Swedish krona	0.4373	0.4444	0.42	0.48	0.4415
Norwegian krona	0.4839	0.4818	0.47	0.50	0.4881
Danish krone	0.5143	0.5228	0.50	0.53	0.5194
Finland mark	0.8585	0.8571	0.84	0.88	0.8635
Canadian dollar	2.4193	2.4584	2.37	2.50	2.4379
Australian dollar	2.6198	2.6619	2.57	2.70	2.6423
S. African rand	0.7542	0.7684	0.68	0.77	0.7807
Belgian franc (10)	0.9498	0.9850	0.93	0.98	0.9635
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7847	2.8297	2.73	2.87	2.8105
Italian lira (1000)	1.9848	2.0167	1.85	2.05	2.0041
Jordanian dinar	4.8900	5.0100	4.89	5.01	4.8950
Egyptian pound	0.9800	1.0400	0.98	1.04	1.0179
Irish punt	3.8304	3.8922			3.8651
Spanish peseta (100)	5.2212	5.3055	5.13	5.38	5.2575
	2.3198	2.3579	2.28	2.39	2.3404

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

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ISRAELI SHARES IN NEW YORK

Table with columns: AMEX, NASDAQ, LAST CHANGE. Lists various Israeli companies and their share prices.

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MISHTANIM LEADING 100

Table with columns: LAST CHANGE. Lists the top 100 Israeli companies.

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INTERNATIONAL SHARES

Table with columns: LAST CHANGE. Lists international share prices.

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NEW YORK

Large table listing various New York stock prices and changes.

Large table listing various New York stock prices and changes.

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Large table listing various New York stock prices and changes.

TASE ROUNDUP

Shares up as shekel down

Mishtanim 252.76 ▲ 0.58% Maof 261.74 ▲ 0.62%

By ROBERT DANIEL

Stock indexes rose as the shekel weakened further yesterday, boding well for the country's exporters, analysts said.

all is bullish, said Eli Nahum, managing director of Zannex Securities in Ramat Gan. The most active issue was Bank Hapoalim, up 1% to NIS 6.97 on NIS 3.8 million of shares traded.

Table with columns: Key Representative Rates, US Dollar, Sterling, Mark.

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

UK shares rise, but continental markets weaken

LONDON (Reuters) - European share markets diverged at the Channel yesterday as continental bourses drifted downward while London shares moved higher.

WALL STREET REPORT

Stocks fall as investors eye wholesale inflation data

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stock prices closed lower yesterday as investors kept a low profile ahead of today's release of the Producer Price Index for March.

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: DJ Industrials, DJ Transport, DJ Utilities, DJ Composite.

OTHER MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: FTSE 100, Nikkei 225, Hang Seng, etc.

DOLLAR CROSS-RATES (US)

Table with columns: Pound, Euro, Yen, etc.

US COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Cocoa, Coffee, Wheat, etc.

LONDON COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Cocoa, Coffee, Wheat, etc.

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Table with columns: Gold, Silver, etc.

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Table with columns: Gold, Silver, etc.

LONDON METAL FIXES

Table with columns: Gold, Silver, etc.

DATA COMMUNICATIONS VIA

ABA COMPUTER SYSTEMS LIMITED... Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Tel Aviv shares data

supplied by Pacific Mediterranean Investments, Tel. 09-958-5873. All other data supplied by CommStock Trading Ltd.

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Report: US will join 3-way training with Israel, Turkey

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

The US has committed its armed forces to participate in three-way training with Israeli and Turkish troops, Defense News reported in its recent issue. US Defense Secretary William Cohen reportedly pledged the cooperation during his meeting with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai last week.

The commitment is certain to tighten the strategic ties between Jerusalem and Ankara at a time when both nations are concerned about a growing threat from Iran. "With Turkey, we want real strategic cooperation, not only trade. Together, and with the support of the US, we will demonstrate how a strong combined power can deter against any threat in the region," Mordechai was quoted as saying in the weekly. But Defense Ministry spokesman Avi Benayahu downplayed the report, saying US participation in the joint maneuvers was only discussed in principle and that nothing was settled during Mordechai's meeting with Cohen.

Still, Mordechai has been a strong supporter of US involvement. He raised the matter during the visit here earlier this year by the Turkish Chief of Staff Gen. Ismail Karadayi. At the time, Karadayi appeared open to the idea and told Mordechai that there are many areas where cooperation between the defense establishments could be improved, a sign that the Turkish military is keen on enhancing ties despite opposition from Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan.

UN won't counter Palestinian AIDS allegation

By URIEL NEELMAN

After meeting with a delegation of Arab ambassadors, a top UN human rights official withdrew his promise to circulate as an official UN Commission document his recent letter condemning Palestinian representative Nabil Ramlawi's accusation that Israel spread AIDS among Palestinian babies. In a letter to Ramlawi, Chairman of the UN Commission on Human Rights Miroslav Somol expressed

his regret at having caused "any harm" by his sympathetic letter to Israeli representative Yosef Landan in the wake of Ramlawi's accusations. The Palestinian representative accused Israeli authorities of "infecting" by injection 300 Palestinian children with the HIV virus during the years of the intifada. Christian Solidarity representative David Litman, who has been urging Somol to take action against the "mendacious and racist allegations" of the Palestinian representative, reiterated his request in an April 8 letter to the chairman in which Litman stressed that "the conscience of the world cannot gloss over [this] grave matter of principle."

Ramlawi, who has not retracted his accusation, asked Somol Wednesday to circulate a letter in which Ramlawi accuses IDF soldiers of "opening fire on a Palestinian mass" and settlers of "deliberately killing and wounding [Palestinians]" as an official UN Commission document.

Turkish mayor on trial for anti-Israel rally

ANKARA (Reuters) - A Turkish state security court yesterday began the trial of a former mayor from the ruling Welfare Party on charges of serious public order offenses for organizing an anti-Israeli protest, a defense lawyer said. "The trial began today. Our request for the release of defendant Bekir Yildiz was rejected," lawyer Mehmet Ali Bulut said. Yildiz enraged secularists by hosting a night of anti-Israel protests in Ankara's Sincan district in January. Yildiz and Iranian Ambassador Ali Reza Bagheri spoke on a stage draped with a banner of the late Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shkaki. The lawyer said Yildiz was accused of "providing aid to an armed gang and making its propaganda" and faced three to five years in jail if found guilty. Ten others who took part in the protest were charged with similar offenses, but four of them were allowed to leave the jail at Tuesday's hearing, the lawyer said.

Israel, China launch joint research fund

By JUDY SIEGEL

The science ministries of Israel and China will this month launch a joint \$5 million research fund. Each will deposit half the amount in a joint account, and the proceeds will finance the work of Chinese and Israeli researchers in the fields of natural resources, health, and agriculture. The decision was taken during the visit of China's deputy science minister, Prof. Zhu Lilan, who arrived here this week at the head of a senior delegation. Zhu praised the high level of science in Israel and the way in which advanced technologies have been integrated in local industry. She expressed the hope that the existing warm scientific ties between the two countries will be deepened and expanded, beyond the cooperation agreement signed in 1993. Israel's participation in the European Union's research and development programs will help advance joint Chinese-Israeli research proposals, she said, as it encourages cooperation with "emerging economies."



Burning issue
Striking Bar-Ilan University students burn tires at a demonstration at the campus's main gate yesterday. (Ronen Angel/Israel Sun)

Doctors continue sanctions at capital's Hadassah hospitals

By JUDY SIEGEL

Hadassah Medical Organization management and hospital physicians yesterday failed to reach an understanding that could have led to three weeks of negotiations over the institution's recovery program. Management would agree only to suspend unilateral changes in the doctors' collective agreement, while the physicians demanded their cancellation. After yesterday's fruitless meeting with the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry's labor relations chief, HMO director Shmuel Penchas is due to return for another session Sunday. In the meantime, members of the doctors' committee said there was "full observance" of yesterday's sanctions, which shut outpatient clinics in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem and Mt. Scopus Hadassah-University hospitals. In addition, all medical school classes have been cancelled until further notice. Penchas said yesterday it is impossible for HMO's board of directors to cancel changes in the doctors' collective agreement; this, he said, "would require a two-week cooling-off period after three weeks of negotiations and cause a further loss of money that would otherwise have been saved from cuts of wages and other benefits." Penchas dismissed anonymous demands by some Hadassah department heads for his resignation. "Making such statements is a standard tactic in a labor struggle - an attempt to undermine my confidence," he declared. "But it won't work." Penchas urged the doctors to

"come to their senses" and realize the danger posed by their refusal to accept the recovery plan. "If sanctions persist and deficits continue to grow, there is a risk that Hadassah will have serious structural changes and lower standards of medicine forced upon it," he said. The doctors have declared that they are not to blame for HMO's NIS 187 million deficit, and that they cannot make any concessions until the unilateral cancellation of the collective agreement is abrogated. Meanwhile, Kupat Holim Clalit administrative and maintenance personnel went back to work yesterday morning after three days of sanctions, obeying a restraining order issued by the Tel Aviv District Labor Court. The two sides were asked to negotiate and report back on April 15.

Yair Netanyahu has problems getting into exclusive school

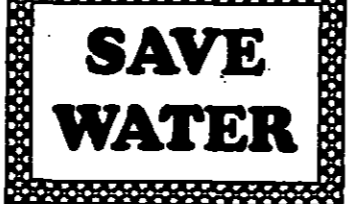
By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

He may be allowed to throw pillows around the Oval Office, but five-year-old Yair Netanyahu is reportedly having trouble getting into a prestigious Jerusalem elementary school. According to press reports, Sara Netanyahu has been trying to enroll her son, who starts first grade this fall, in the Kesher School, regarded as the "in" place to send your children among the capital's yuppie set. However, school principal Ruth Lahavi was accused by Sara Netanyahu of giving her and Yair the runaround. Senior Jerusalem Municipality officials reportedly said Lahavi was not interested in having Netanyahu in the class because of the security problems and media circus it would entail. Sources close to the prime minister reportedly said they had heard Lahavi comment that the prime minister's son would not study in her school. A frustrated Sara Netanyahu then asked the Education Ministry for help. She was referred to the Jerusalem Education Authority. According to a municipality spokeswoman, "There was a misunderstanding between the school principal and the prime minister's wife about the registration procedure." Authority director Meir Krues "looked into the matter and the misunderstanding was straightened out," the spokeswoman said. Netanyahu and Lahavi are reportedly now scheduled to have a meeting to discuss the matter, which is the regular initial procedure for school registration, according to parents who have children there. Dudi Yifrah, whose son would be one of Yair Netanyahu's classmates if the prime minister's son is accepted into Kesher, said that while he and his wife had "no objection at all" to the boy attending the school, it was important the Netanyahu family "be treated like any other family and are not given any preferential treatment." His wife, Yoni, said the younger Netanyahu "has to go to school somewhere, after all." But she noted that over 100 applicants had been turned down for the school, with limited space first assigned to siblings of those already attending the school. "I don't know if he's even appropriate for the school," Dudi Yifrah said, noting that it stresses tolerance

and pluralism. However, he said he was sure Lahavi would meet with Sara Netanyahu, since "she is willing to meet with anyone." Another parent from the school had more misgivings. "Assuming they're found appropriate, I'm not particularly happy about having my child go to a school that will require such stringent security. Imagine the type of security that will be needed every time they go out on a trip. On the other hand, the kid has the right to go to a public school." "But the school doesn't need the media spotlight" the parent said, adding Yair's attendance would be "an impediment to its functioning." He added that he doubted Yair Netanyahu would be accepted, if his family is judged by the school's credo. The lack of any recent "public gestures towards non-Orthodox movements makes me wonder how ingrained respect for religious pluralism is" in the prime minister, raising questions about whether the Netanyahu family are appropriate for the school, he said. Ruth Lahavi declined comment on the report, and Sara Netanyahu's personal secretary was unavailable for comment.

CAMP DAVID

Continued from Page 7
ions." Quandt says. "And at a time when the Arab world doesn't seem to be very organized or able to speak with a single voice, maybe this would be an ideal bargaining situation, with a strong Israel backed by the US putting pressure on Arafat to settle for half a loaf or less." Quandt predicts Israel and the Palestinian Authority will be able to work out security arrangements. But the "testy agenda" for the final-status talks - refugees, borders, settlements, Jerusalem, statehood - has to hurdle dramatically conflicting positions, that could doom a summit, he states. "THE MOST obvious thing that would happen is the negotiations would probably fail, the gap is so enormous. I don't see any easy way of patching over the differences on [final-status issues]." "If Rabin and Peres were there with reasonably strong public support, I would be a little bit more inclined to say it could be done. You [would be] within 10 or 15 percent on most of the issues, and an American bridging proposal just might be what's needed, [as well as] creating trade-offs here and there, and so forth. "But going into final status when the gap isn't 10 or 15 percent but is more like 50 or 60 percent - that's a hell of a bridge.



EDRI

Continued from Page 1
Among those arrested was Dr. Samir Khadi, head of Alia Hospital in Hebron and a former Hamas deportee, Kafr Tzurif residents said. Troops converged on the village early Wednesday and barred journalists from entering. An IDF video released afterward, however, showed a handcuffed Palestinian prisoner leading soldiers to an olive tree and pointing downward to Edri's grave. Soldiers soon dug up the body and Edri's personal effects. From the interrogation, it was learned that some members of the cell set out last September in a vehicle with Israeli license plates toward the Tzurif army base with the express purpose of kidnapping a soldier. They said Edri was picked up near the base. One of them drew a pistol and shot Edri dead shortly afterward, when he suspected Edri knew he had been kidnapped by Arabs.

The group then hid Edri's body in the car and drove back to Kafr Tzurif, where they picked up another member of the cell and buried Edri under an olive tree in a wadi south of the village. They told their interrogators that they drew a map of the grave's location and passed it on to their Hamas operator. They also said they tried to repeat the kidnapping and had actually picked up a soldier, but he managed to get out of the car before they could harm him. Edri, 20, who was promoted posthumously, is to be buried on Sunday, at 1 p.m., in the military section of the Beit Shemesh Cemetery. The demise of the cell followed the Tel Aviv bombing. The cell had planned to plant the bomb, then escape, and two members of the cell drove to Tel Aviv. While one of them went to the cafe, the other waited in the getaway car, but for some reason the bomb went off. The driver then returned to Kafr Tzurif and fled to Hebron the next day, when the identity of the bomber became known. "Uncovering this cell proves that the various security arms are continuing to fight terror in every corner and in every place, even when it doesn't appear in the headlines and when it looks as if nothing has been done," said Deputy Chief of General Staff Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilnai. "It also proves to anyone who attacks us that we will reach them."

MORDECHAI

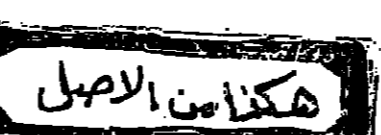
Continued from Page 1
peace process between us and the Palestinians to achieve real peace." Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu Rudeineh denounced Mordechai's remark. "This statement does nothing to help the peace process. This is not the soul of partnership. In Oslo we decided to stop talking about occupation, about the past." He said the remarks were tantamount to "declaring war," considering that Palestinians know that such an invasion is possible. "You know the Palestinian cities are surrounded by tanks and the situation is very tense. In this kind of situation, we need to ease tensions not raise them."

TA burial society officials suspected of tax fraud

Four senior officials of the Tel Aviv Hevra Kadisha, suspected of defrauding the tax authorities of millions of shekels between 1990 and 1996, were released on bail yesterday by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court. The four are former chairman Yisrael Ehrlich, 74, of Tel Aviv; deputy chairman Shmuel Gefen, 60, of Tel Aviv; comptroller and accountant Asher Deskel, 40, of Ramat Gan; and treasurer Rabbi Binyamin Shecharansky, 65, of Tel Aviv. All four maintained their innocence. Ehrlich is suspected of receiving NIS 600,000 from the burial society, which was listed in the books as a "loan" and a business expense. He was not required to pay either the interest or linkage and has yet to repay any of the "loan." In addition to a variety of similar offenses, he is suspected of purchasing such things as gasoline and books for his personal use with checks drawn on the Hevra Kadisha's account and listed on its books as business expenses. Some two kilometers of irrigation pipe and other items the society purchased were discovered on his children's moshav. Ehrlich was freed on NIS 250,000 bail. Gefen, who was authorized to sign checks, approved as business expenses all sorts of payments to workers, such as for gasoline and repairs for their private cars and loans of hundreds of thousands of shekels without interest or linkage. These were given without the taxes required by law being deducted. He was freed on NIS 525,000 bail. Deskel and Shecharansky are suspected of similar offenses. They were freed on NIS 525,000 and NIS 650,000 bail respectively. (Tm)

10 million expected to use Ben-Gurion in 2000

By HANI SHAPIRO
Ben-Gurion Airport was planned to accommodate at the most four million passengers a year. It is now used by some seven million passengers a year, and the predictions are that during 2000, 10 million or more will pass through its gates. The much touted new terminal, Ben-Gurion 2000, has been held up by numerous objections and court cases. According to the Airports Authority spokeswoman, Sara Erez, the earliest it will open, if there are no further delays, is 2001. This week, Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav and Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy decided to set up joint teams to discuss their ministries' preparedness 2000, when millions of Christian pilgrims are expected. The teams are to study air passenger traffic, and the effect the mass of visitors will have on public transportation and traffic and parking in cities. One suggestion to reduce congestion at the airport is to conduct the entry formalities in the air. Organized groups would go through the departure formalities at their hotels or in city centers. Other suggestions are an easing of entry and departure procedures for Israelis and an increase in the number of airline positions at the airport.



Hap Jerusalem stuns Mac. TA to take basketball's State Cup

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Maccabi Tel Aviv coach Zvi Scherf might as well give Jerusalem's Adi Gordon the keys to Yad Eliahu. Gordon owns the place.

After tossing in the winning basket at the buzzer to beat Scherf's club in last year's State Cup final, Gordon burned Maccabi Tel Aviv again last night, hitting for 32 points to give Hapoel Jerusalem its second straight State Cup victory over Maccabi, 89-82.

Whether it was hitting four of Jerusalem's incredible nine first-half three-pointers to build his team's early advantage or helping it overcome Maccabi's valiant second-half comeback, Gordon was unstoppable.

Three were certainly wild at Yad Eliahu last night. The first half not only began with two, one from

each team, but ended with an off-balance almost half-court try by Brad Leaf. In between, however, Jerusalem put on a shooting display the likes of which have never been seen in State Cup action.

It was that three-point shooting, great defense and some fine coaching by Kedar that helped Jerusalem to its first-half advantage. Kedar, a big believer in psychology, worked wonders with his team's head last night. First, he started Doron Shefa over Papi Turgeeman, and Shefa repaid him with six early points.

Meanwhile, Scherf erred badly by replacing Oded Katash early in the half. Katash had early success

on Gordon, but Scherf yanked him, preferring Brad Leaf's defense. The resulting dropoff in overall offensive flow hurt Maccabi, though Leaf tossed in 10 first-half points.

Soon they were breathing right down Jerusalem's necks. Led by Doron Sheffer, Maccabi went on a 10-1 spurt to open the second half, and Hapoel fans' faces were suddenly red, but with embarrassment.

Jerusalem, meanwhile, appeared rattled. While Maccabi played much better defense, Hapoel's ball movement disappeared, but then suddenly, there was that man again. Gordon scored twice after a basket by Bingenheimer, and suddenly Jerusalem was back in the cat bird's seat, leading 65-60.

Papi Turgeeman joined the three-point parade, hitting one just seconds after being inserted into the line-up as Kedar's uncanny ability to make the right moves at the right time continued.

That's when Bingenheimer, much maligned all season, hit a huge three for Jerusalem, seemingly opening up some breathing room. But in this replay of last year's tense final, Sheffer came right back with a try of his own, and it was 75-74.

Gordon, however, was the King of Threes last night, and fired up another, then hit a drive, again putting the nails in Maccabi's coffin. Jerusalem survived some shaky foul shooting down the stretch by Billy Thompson, but also benefited from his incredible stuffing of Constantin Popa late in the game.

Maccabi tried to get some offense going, but with Sheffer fouling out, White also on the sidelines with five fouls, and Katash missing a lay-up, there was nothing else for Maccabi fans to do but take their yellow scarves off to Gordon, who'd done their team in again.

For Jerusalem, the victory was also a major boost as it prepares for this Monday's opening of its semi-final playoff series vs. Maccabi Ra'anana.

For Maccabi it remains to be seen just how the State Cup defeat will affect its opener Sunday vs. Hapoel Eilat. Sheffer and Henefeld had 16 apiece for Maccabi, while Bingenheimer added 17 for Hapoel. In the women's State Cup, Elitzur Holon edged Elitzur Ramle, 84-83, in overtime to win the "double," after winning the league championship earlier this week.

SPORTS

in brief

Disabled riders to compete at Gamla

The first national riding competition for disabled riders will be held on Sunday at the Gamla Therapeutic Riding Center, located at Moshav Ma'ale Gamla on the Golan Heights.

Some 100 riders, children and adults, from five riding centers throughout the country, will compete in beginners and advanced groups.

Among the young riders will be children with Down's Syndrome, cerebral palsy and autism while the adults are mainly mentally disabled.

The event will begin at 9:30 a.m. Call 06-6914564 or 06-6938987 for more information. Heather Chair

Basketball playoffs start Sunday

The National Basketball League semifinals get under way on Sunday here are the dates of the upcoming semi-final games:

Maccabi Tel Aviv vs. Hapoel Eilat - Sunday (Tel Aviv), Wednesday (Eilat), Sunday (April 20th, Tel Aviv), *Wednesday (23, Eilat), *Monday (28th, Tel Aviv). Maccabi Ra'anana vs. Hapoel Jerusalem - Monday (Ra'anana), Thursday (Jerusalem), Sunday (20th, Ra'anana), *Thursday (24, Jerusalem), *Monday (28th, Ra'anana). *if necessary.

Bourges win women's EuroLeague trophy

LARISSA, Greece (Reuters) - France's Bourges scored a surprise 71-52 win over favorites Wuppertal of Germany in the women's EuroLeague final four tournament decider yesterday. Bourges took a 12-point lead early in the first half, capitalising on their height advantage.

Italian side Como, twice European champions, were beaten 74-58 by Slovakia's Ruzomberok in the third place playoff.

Graf delays comeback, to miss Hamburg Open

BONN (Reuters) - Steffi Graf yesterday postponed her comeback after a knee injury, pulling out of this month's Hamburg Open where she could have clashed with new world No. 1 Martina Hingis.

"My long break from the game means I have to be careful about my preparations which will take a bit longer," Graf said.

"I don't want to put my good recovery in any danger by coming back too soon." Graf lost the No. 1 spot to Hingis at the end of last month. The Hamburg tournament starts on April 29.

Referee has appeal against life ban rejected

GENEVA (Reuters) - Swiss referee Kurt Roethlisberger had his appeal against a life ban for attempted bribery rejected by UEFA yesterday.

Roethlisberger, once recognised as one of soccer's top officials, was suspended two weeks ago after a UEFA investigation found he had solicited a bribe to fix a European Champions' league match between Grasshopper Zurich and Auxerre on October 30 last year.

Since the decision Roethlisberger, who officiated at the 1990 and 1994 World Cup finals and the 1988 Seoul Olympics, had steadfastly maintained his innocence.

But the five-member UEFA board of appeals rejected the 48-year-old schoolteacher's explanation of the events and stood by their original ruling.

Man. Utd. consider appeal after FA snub

LONDON (Reuters) - Manchester United may consider legal action to force an extension of the premier league season after officials rejected their plea yesterday for help in easing a fixture backlog.

Championship leaders United still have six league games and at least one European Cup match to squeeze in before the May 11 deadline.

But their request fell on deaf ears as the premier league's two-man board saw no reason to lengthen the season.

United chairman Martin Edwards was furious at the decision, branded the officials "amateurs" and vowed that United would appeal and consider legal action.

Taiba return to scene of tragedy

By ORI LEWIS

National League soccer will try to recover from the trauma of last weekend's tragic happenings at Umm el-Fahm where Wahib Jbara died during a match between Hapoel Taiba and Bnei Yehuda.

Taiba return to the scene of their trauma tomorrow for a crucial match with fellow-strugglers Zefirim Holon. The home side look almost certain to be relegated, but if there is still any hope for them, then it will only come through a victory over Holon.

Leaders Betar Jerusalem will no doubt continue their advance towards the title and a second win this season over Maccabi Haifa - this time at Teddy Stadium - will be further proof of their overwhelming dominance of the league. The Betar's last week-end to Hapoel Petah Tikva, but that appears to be only a mild hiccup on the way to the championship.

Elsewhere, second-placed Hapoel Beersheba host Hapoel Jerusalem and a win will be vital as they aim to hold on to second place, with Hapoel Petah Tikva breathing down their necks.

Hapoel Tel Aviv are looking to ride the crest of their victory wave from last week when they finally notched a win under coach Dror Kashtan. They visit Maccabi Herzliya and three points would do wonders for their confidence as they hope to break away from the relegation zone.

This weekend's National League fixtures (all matches kick off tomorrow at 16:30 unless stated): Hapoel Taiba v. Zefirim Holon, Umm el-Fahm; Bnei Yehuda v. Hapoel Petah Tikva, Hatikva Quarter; Betar Jerusalem v. Maccabi Haifa, Teddy Stadium 17:00; Maccabi Tel Aviv v. Hapoel Kfar Sava, National Stadium, Ramat Gan 17:45; Maccabi Herzliya v. Hapoel Tel Aviv, Herzliya today 16:00; Hapoel Beersheba v. Hapoel Jerusalem, Beersheba; Hapoel Hefa v. Ironi Rishon LeZion, Kiryat Elimelech 15:30; Maccabi Petah Tikva v. Hapoel Beit She'an, Petah Tikva.

Coventry escape relegation zone

LONDON (AP) - Coventry followed up Sunday's stunning 2-1 win at title-chasing Liverpool with a come-from-behind 3-1 victory over Chelsea on Wednesday night to improve their chances of survival in the Premiership.

After Paul Hughes had given Chelsea the lead two minutes before half time, the Sky Blues hit back with three goals in nine minutes after the break through Dion Dublin, Paul Williams and Noel Whelan as Gordon Strachan's team moved up to 15th in the 20-club standings, three above the relegation zone.

A last minute own goal by Derby's Darryl Powell lifted Southampton away from last place in a 1-1 draw. Powell watched in disbelief as the ball struck his legs in a goalmouth scramble and rolled over the line after Ashley Ward had given Derby a 1-0 lead in the 66th minute.

Nottingham Forest, who did not

play on Wednesday, drop to last place. Forest have 31 points from 34 games, Southampton 31 from 33 with a better goal difference and Middlesbrough, who ended their match at West Ham goalless 33 from 32.

Coventry have jumped above Sunderland and West Ham and now has 36 from 34.

At the other end, Aston Villa jumped above Newcastle into fourth place with a 2-0 victory at Wimbledon.

Bolton came from behind to beat Manchester City 2-1 and clinch the Division One title.

Wednesday's results: Premier League: Coventry 3, Chelsea 1; Derby 1, Southampton 1; Everton 1, Leicester 1; Sheffield Wednesday 2, Tottenham 1; West Ham 0, Middlesbrough 0; Wimbledon 0, Aston Villa 2. Division One: Charlton 2, Huddersfield 1; Manchester City 1, Bolton 2; West Bromwich Albion 1; Crystal Palace 0.

Sports Editors: Joseph Hoffman and Ori Lewis



CAST A GIANT SHADOW - Phillies center fielder Wendell Magee hangs onto the outfield fence while trying to reach a home run hit by San Francisco Giants' Barry Bonds during first inning action in San Francisco on Wednesday. (Reuters)

Blue Jays stifle White Sox 5-0 in solitude

CHICAGO (AP) - Roger Clemens allowed two hits in 5 2-3 innings before leaving with a muscle cramp in his groin, and the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Chicago White Sox 5-0 Wednesday before a paid attendance of just 746.

It was Chicago's lowest home paid attendance since Sept. 21, 1970, when 672 attended a doubleheader against Kansas City at the old Comiskey Park. Including free tickets and those who used tickets from Tuesday night, total attendance in the 44,321-seat ballpark was 1,677.

The game was moved from night to day because of the cold. Temperatures were just above freezing on Wednesday.

Clemens, beating the White Sox for the second time this season, struck out seven and walked two. He gave up singles to Dave Martinez in the first and Ray Durham in the second.

Joe Carter had three hits and drove in two runs for Toronto. The Blue Jays scored a run in the

first and then added four in the third off Wilson Alvarez (0-2), who matched a career high with 12 strikeouts in seven innings.

Tigers 10, Twins 5 In Detroit, Bobby Higginson hit his first career grand slam as Detroit rallied to beat the Minnesota Twins before 6,477, the smallest crowd at Tiger Stadium in eight years.

Detroit evened its record at 4-4, the first time the Tigers were 8-8 last April 17.

NATIONAL LEAGUE Giants 3, Phillies 0 Barry Bonds hit his first homer of the season, and Kirk Rueter (1-0) allowed four hits in seven innings as the San Francisco Giants beat the Philadelphia Phillies 3-0.

Bonds, moved up to third in the batting order from the cleanup spot, connected off Bobby Munoz (0-2) for a two-run homer in the first.

Rod Beck got three outs, finishing the five-hitter for his major league-leading fifth save.

Rockies 13, Reds 4 In Denver, Ellis Burks homered twice for the 13th multihomer game of his career, and Andres Galarraga had four hits as Colorado won it sixth straight.

On an afternoon with snow flurries and a wind-chill near 6, Dante Bichette added two hits and three RBIs for the Rockies, who built an 8-0 lead after five innings.

Mark Thompson (2-0), who pitched seven scoreless innings in Cincinnati six days ago, was dominant through five innings before Barry Larkin, Willie Greene, and Reggie Sanders hit consecutive homers in the sixth.

Ricky Bones (0-1) was pounded for seven runs and 10 hits in four innings.

Wednesday's NL results: San Francisco 3, Philadelphia 0; Colorado 13, Cincinnati 4; Atlanta 4, Boston 3 (12); Los Angeles 3, NY 2 (14); Pittsburgh 4, San Diego 2.

Wednesday's AL results: Texas at Milwaukee, ppd.; Detroit 10, Minnesota 5; Toronto 5, Chicago 0; Oakland 4, Boston 3 (10); Seattle 11, Cleveland 1; Baltimore 4, Kansas City 2 (11); NY 12, Anaheim 5.

PSG crush Liverpool 3-0

PARIS (Reuters) - Paris St Germain took a giant step towards their second consecutive European Cup Winners' Cup final when they crushed Liverpool 3-0 in their semifinal first leg at the Parc des Princes last night.

The Parisians, bidding to become the first team to retain the trophy, took an early lead thanks to Brazilian Leonardo, who took advantage of a blunder by Liverpool goalkeeper David James in the 10th minute to score his first goal of 1997.

James was again to blame for PSG's second goal as he dropped the ball on a cross from the right to allow midfielder Benoit Caulet to make it 2-0 just before the break.

But there was nothing James could do to stop PSG's third goal, scored from close range by Jerome Leroy in the 83rd minute from a pass by substitute Cyrille Pouget.

Hornets notch up 50th win of season

CHARLOTTE, NC (AP) - Charlotte tied a franchise record with its 50th victory Wednesday night, a 136-111 triumph over Boston's depleted Celtics in which the Hornets scored the most points in the National Basketball Association this season.

Glenn Rice had 29 points for the Hornets, who built a 25-point edge after three quarters and went on to their highest point total and widest margin of victory this season. They also attempted 21 3-pointers and made a franchise-record 15.

Rookie Tony Delk had 18 of his season-high 25 points in the fourth quarter as the Hornets improved to 50-26.

Ricky Pierce added 24 points and Muggsy Bogues had 13 points and 10 assists for the Hornets, who improved to 24 games over .500 for the first time.

The Celtics lost their 10th consecutive game.

Hawks 116, 76ers 101 In Philadelphia, Dikembe Mutombo blocked three straight shots in a nine-second span and the

Atlanta Hawks set a season record with 23 steals. Mutombo finished with six of the Hawks' 13 blocks, which tied the team season high.

Mookie Blaylock's 19 points led six Hawks in double figures as Atlanta moved a half-game ahead of Detroit for fourth place in the Eastern Conference.

Allen Iverson, who scored 44 points and played all 48 minutes in the 76ers' last game Monday against Chicago, once again played the whole game, leading the 76ers with 40 points.

In Indianapolis, Michael Jordan, struggling from the field, hit seven of eight free throws in the fourth quarter.

Jordan was only 8-for-19 from the field and had six turnovers with his 23 points, but his timely free throws turned the game around early in the fourth quarter.

Scottie Pippen added 17 points and Jason Caffey had 14 points and a career-high 16 rebounds for the Bulls.

EASTERN CONFERENCE					WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division					Midwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB		W	L	Pct	GB
x-Miami	18	76			x-Utah	57	17	.773	
x-New York	43	23	.657	5	x-Houston	52	24	.684	7
x-Orlando	42	34	.553	16	Minnesota	37	39	.487	22
Washington	39	37	.513	19	Dallas	23	53	.303	38
New Jersey	29	52	.357	34	Denver	20	58	.263	39
x-Charlotte	24	58	.293	39	San Antonio	20	58	.263	39
Philadelphia	21	55	.278	42	Vancouver	12	66	.154	48
Boston	13	64	.169	45	Pacific Division				
					x-Seattle	52	24	.684	
					x-LA Lakers	52	25	.675	1/2
					x-Portland	45	33	.577	8
					x-Phoenix	37	39	.487	15
					LA Clippers	34	42	.447	18
					Sacramento	31	45	.408	21
					Golden State	29	49	.368	24
					x-San Diego	28	50	.360	27
					x-San Jose	27	51	.346	30
					x-Memphis	26	52	.333	33
					x-Minnesota	25	53	.323	36
					x-Denver	24	54	.311	39
					x-New Orleans	23	55	.294	42
					x-Orlando	22	56	.284	45
					x-Charlotte	21	57	.273	48
					x-Washington	20	58	.263	51
					x-New York	19	59	.252	54
					x-Boston	18	60	.242	57
					x-Philadelphia	17	61	.232	60
					x-Miami	16	62	.222	63
					x-Orlando	15	63	.212	66
					x-Charlotte	14	64	.202	69
					x-Washington	13	65	.192	72
					x-New York	12	66	.182	75
					x-Boston	11	67	.172	78
					x-Philadelphia	10	68	.162	81
					x-Miami	9	69	.152	84
					x-Orlando	8	70	.142	87
					x-Charlotte	7	71	.132	90
					x-Washington	6	72	.122	93
					x-New York	5	73	.112	96
					x-Boston	4	74	.102	99
					x-Philadelphia	3	75	.092	102
					x-Miami	2	76	.082	105
					x-Orlando	1	77	.072	108
					x-Charlotte	0	78	.062	111
					x-Washington	0	79	.052	114
					x-New York	0	80	.042	117
					x-Boston	0	81	.032	120
					x-Philadelphia	0	82	.022	123
					x-Miami	0	83	.012	126
					x-Orlando	0	84	.002	129
					x-Charlotte	0	85	.000	132
					x-Washington	0	86	.000	135
					x-New York	0	87	.000	138
					x-Boston	0	88	.000	141
					x-Philadelphia	0	89	.000	144
					x-Miami	0	90	.000	147
					x-Orlando	0	91	.000	150
					x-Charlotte	0	92	.000	153
					x-Washington	0	93	.000	156
					x-New York	0	94	.000	159
					x-Boston	0	95	.000	162
					x-Philadelphia	0	96	.000	165

Romania to return Jewish assets Alleged wife-killer attempts suicide

By DAVID HARRIS

The Romanian cabinet is today expected to proclaim a government decree returning Jewish communal property seized during World War II and the Communist era, World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO) vice-chairman Naphtali Lavie told the *Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

Unlike the Poles, who introduced a parliamentary bill to discuss the issue, the Romanian government's decree will be implemented without the need for legislation.

The declaration was concluded after two days of talks this week between senior Romanian politicians and a team from the WJRO.

The property will be handed over to a foundation to be established by the WJRO and the Federation of Romanian Jewish Communities.

The value of the communal property has not yet been ascertained. However, lost Jewish assets are thought to include 295 demolished synagogues and hundreds of expropriated properties - 165 schools and 31 hospitals, as

well as ritual baths and homes for the elderly.

"The authorities have been very friendly and showed great sympathy toward Israel and the Jews," said Lavie. "This offer has come, despite the severely depressed economic situation."

Among those involved in the talks on Tuesday and Wednesday were Romanian President Emil Constantinescu, Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea, the foreign and defense ministers, and senior senators, together with Jewish community head Professor Nikolai Cajal.

The politicians agreed it is high time to meet the demands of the Jewish community, but in turn expressed the hope that Israel and the Jewish people at large will push for Romania's acceptance into NATO and the European Union.

While the decree will only apply to communal property, Ciorbea said he will examine any claims from private citizens concerning their family property. There are thought to be 400,000 Israelis of Romanian stock today.

The Jewish community today numbers

some 14,000, of whom the vast majority live in Bucharest. Most of the community is aged over 60. There are some 785 Jewish cemeteries in Romania, according to the Federation. More than 500 communities were destroyed during the war, reducing the Jewish population by half to 400,000. Of the survivors, 320,000 left the country with the start of the Communist era.

A decree issued in December 1944, after Romania switched to the Allied side in the war, repealed the previous anti-Jewish laws and ordered the return of confiscated Jewish properties. But four years later, the communists took them back again through full-scale nationalization.

In February, Poland's parliament approved the bill on state relations with Jewish communities allowing its nine surviving communities to recover some property lost during and after the Holocaust.

"The attitude of the Romanian and Hungarian governments has been far more positive than that of the Poles," said a source close to the agreement.

Alleged wife-killer attempts suicide

By URIEL HEILMAN

The alleged murderer of Georgette Sitbon, her husband Yosef, tried to hang himself in his Haifa jail cell, police reported yesterday. He was taken to Rambam Hospital, according to him. His remand was later extended, with his attorney's consent, until Sunday by Haifa Magistrate's Court.

Responding to the Wednesday murder, Elana Dorfman, resource coordinator for the Anti-Violence Hot Line in Haifa, said that cases of women refusing to leave abusive husbands are not uncommon. "The problem here was one of control," she said, explaining that Sitbon had said she could not leave her husband because he was ill. Yosef Sitbon, 54, an unemployed electrician, was diagnosed with cancer over five years ago and is partially blind.

Dorfman said that Georgette Sitbon never contacted the Haifa hot line, but that she had had contact with a social worker.

"We see cases like this every day," said Dorfman, who works at the hot line that helps some 1,200 women in Haifa and the North every year.

The hot line was informed two weeks ago that the Ministry of Social Welfare is reducing its annual allocation from NIS 500,000 to NIS 60,000, but according to Dorfman, the ministry promised last week to find the funds necessary to maintain the hot line's current operations. Since then, there has been no communication from the ministry.

Dorfman maintained that it is essential that the annual allocation be a permanent commitment, so that the hot line does not have to go through a struggle to obtain the necessary funds every year. In addition, if the hot line loses its annual NIS 500,000, says Dorfman, the three social workers it employs will have to be dismissed.

The hot line also receives some financial support from the United Jewish Appeal, the Jewish Agency, and several other North American

and Israeli foundations. Aside from assisting women over the telephone, the seven-year-old hot line runs one of the nation's 11 permanent battered women's shelters, maintains an emergency shelter that houses and treats women for up to a month and a half, and provides referrals and some free legal counselling to victims of domestic violence. It also runs outreach and educational programs designed to raise awareness of domestic violence among medical professionals and police, as well as in schools, community groups, immigrant cultures, and the general public.

Aside from the three social workers, who are at the heart of the operation, the hot line utilizes the help of approximately 45 volunteers, all of whom must undergo four months of training. The hot line operates 12 hours a day in Hebrew, Arabic, Amharic, Russian, and English. It can be reached at (04) 853 0161.

WEATHER

Haifa 9-16
Tiberias 8-17
Afula 5-16
Samarin 4-12
Tel Aviv 10-17
Jerusalem 2-11
Beersheba 7-15
Dead Sea 11-22

Forecast: Partly cloudy, low temperatures. Shabbat: Rise in temperatures, partly cloudy.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Clouds
Amsterdam	05	17	cloudy
Buenos Aires	17	24	rain
Chicago	04	13	cloudy
Copenhagen	04	10	clear
Frankfurt	01	08	cloudy
Geneva	01	08	rain
Hong Kong	21	27	rain
Johannesburg	14	22	cloudy
London	10	15	clear
Los Angeles	10	20	cloudy
Madrid	10	14	clear
Manila	24	30	clear
Montreal	01	07	clear
New York	01	07	clear
Paris	06	13	clear
Rome	06	13	clear
Stockholm	00	06	cloudy
Sydney	13	20	clear
Tokyo	13	20	clear
Toronto	08	16	cloudy
Vancouver	07	15	clear
Zurich	04	17	clear



Big mitzva
Friends and relatives are undeterred by stormy Jerusalem weather yesterday from celebrating a mass bar mitzva ceremony for some 1,000 boys born in the former Soviet Union. The Western Wall event was held to mark the 94th birthday of the late Rabbi Menahem Schneerson, the Lubavitcher rebbe.

A-G: High Court should uphold petitions against Dotan's parole

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein yesterday told the High Court it should uphold the four petitions against the parole of former chief air force procurement officer Rami Dotan. Had those petitions not been filed, Rubinstein said, he would have himself asked the court not to allow Dotan's parole.

Dotan, a brigadier-general, had been sentenced to 13 years in prison and demoted to private for soliciting and accepting bribes from companies doing business with the air force.

Rubinstein said there were several flaws in the military parole board's decision and the way it was made. For example, he said, it acted like it was a civilian parole board and failed to consider the difference between military and civil law.

Thus, he said, a military parole board may release a prisoner after he has served half of his sentence, while a civilian board can only act

after two-thirds of the sentence have been served. He attributed this to the fact that most violations of military law are committed by young men doing compulsory service, often under conditions of great pressure, rather than wrongdoings by highly experienced senior officers.

Rubinstein also argued that while this is not the current norm, the parole board ought to have allowed a representative of the Judge-Advocate General to be heard at its hearings, since its decision damaged the status of the military justice system.

He also said the board failed to consider the damage caused by Dotan that came to light only after he was sentenced.

No end-date for Bar-On probe

State Attorney Edna Arbel is not willing to give an estimate of when the investigation into the Bar-On Affair will end, although earlier this week she joked that everybody likes to clean-up before Pessah.

In an interview with Israel Radio, Arbel rejected rumors of a dispute or differences of opinion between the police investigating team and the State Attorney's Office. Explaining why it has taken longer than originally intended, Arbel said: "As long as things have not been concluded, one can't talk about either a dispute between us or of us being in one mind. We are studying the information and forming our opinion." *Liat Collins*

Most domestic violence not reported

The judicial system is able to cope with cases of domestic abuse but only a minority of incidents are reported, and they are often those where the violence had reached a very advanced stage, State Attorney Edna Arbel said yesterday.

She urged people to report cases of domestic abuse and said her office and the police take them seriously. Arbel said awareness concerning domestic abuse had risen over the years but is still not sufficient.

She said a special panel is considering the complex question of jail sentences for offenders. *Liat Collins*

Israeli tourist killed by alligator in Costa Rica

By Jerusalem Post Staff and agencies

An Israeli tourist in Costa Rica was killed while swimming Tuesday when he was attacked by a large alligator.

Ronen Gilad, 23, of Givatayim, had dived into the lagoon at the Mondonaguillo Nature Reserve about 50 kilometers east of the capital, San Jose, when he was attacked by a three-meter-long alligator. The giant reptile seized the swimmer in its jaws and dragged him under the surface, where he drowned.

Gilad's struggles were noticed by a park ranger, who tried with a colleague to reach him by boat; but by the time they approached the alligator, the swimmer was already dead. The two rangers used poles to force the alligator to release his body.

"Gilad found himself facing a giant alligator, and despite all his efforts he could not save himself," a police statement said Wednesday. The statement added that Gilad had been warned of the presence of alligators as part of government guidelines for tourists.

Israeli Consul-General Yoed Magen, interviewed on Israel Radio from San Jose yesterday, said such attacks are "extremely rare."

Gilad's body is to arrive from Costa Rica this afternoon. He is to be buried Sunday in Kochav Yair, where he grew up. He is survived by his parents and four sisters.

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For information on the Conference Program, call 02-5883286

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